Commentary

Volume Seventy-eight, Number Six, December 1984

The War Against "Star Wars"

Robert Jastrow

Islam vs. Israel
Ronald L. Nettler

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Arch Puddington

Shakespeare in the Original
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From Maoism to the Talmud
(With Sartre Along the Way)
Benny Levy/ Stuart L. Charmé

FICTION:
Beyond Magic Realism
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MUSIC:
Artist in a Cause
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MOVIES:
Dutch Treats
Richard Grenier

BOOKS:

Roger Sandall/Harvey Klehr/Edward Rothstein/ Henrik Bering-Jensen/Roger Starr

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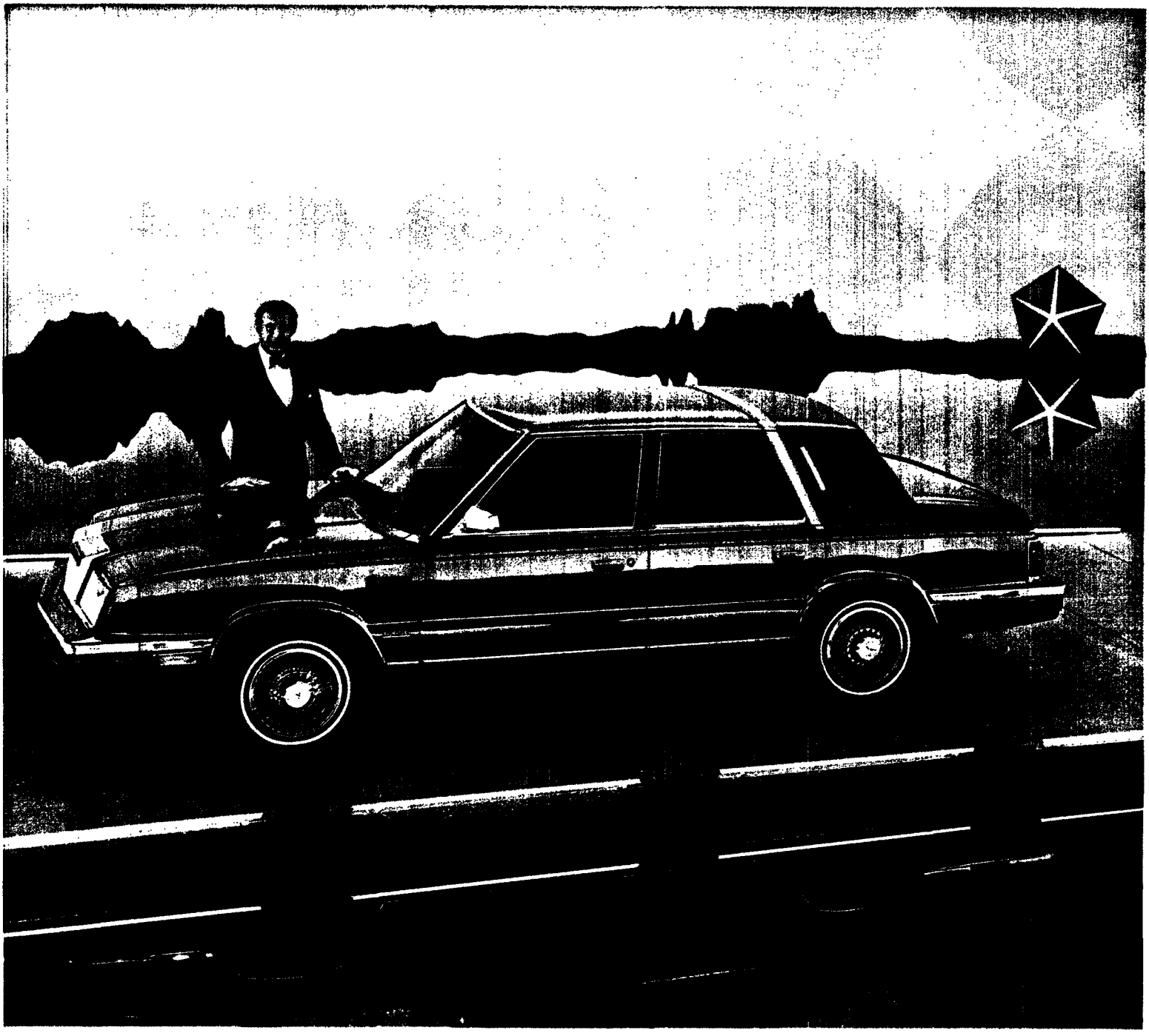

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Commentary

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Letters from Readers

The Soviet Threat

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

It is a striking coincidence that Richard Pipes's article, "How to Cope With the Soviet Threat" [August], appeared almost simultaneously with the publication of two articles, a letter to the editor, and an editorial in the *Journal of the American Medical Association* and another one in the *New England Journal of Medicine*. These articles deal with the disastrous consequences of a nuclear war and the futility of any reasonable medical response. Similar articles written by distinguished physicists, climatologists, and biologists on the ecological consequences of nuclear war have appeared in outstanding scientific journals throughout the year.

Mr. Pipes dismisses the threat of nuclear war by asserting that the "familiar horrors" of nuclear war resemble the holocaust fantasies that have been expressed for more than 5,000 years in religious writings. He calls these quasi-religious fears of the supernatural. He feels that the matter of nuclear war should be stripped of its emotionalism so that we and the Soviets can get down to "matter-of-fact bargaining." He advocates continued political, economic, and military pressure that will result in the collapse of the intransigent Soviet system. A military build-up must include nuclear weapons and anti-ballistic-missile defense systems. He sees no other solution.

Does Mr. Pipes believe that the statement in 1981 that the board of trustees of the American Medical Association made about the medical consequences of a nuclear war and the impossibility of an adequate medical response is emotional and quasi-religious? Does he believe that the 30,000 members of Physicians for Social Responsibility are suffering from fear of an ancient fantasy? Does he believe that the thousands of physicists and biologists, including at least forty Nobel laureates, who fear the destruction of the combatant nations, and perhaps the world, by a nuclear war are irrational? Does he not recognize that ancient holocaust fantasies can quickly become today's realities?

I submit that even a professor of history at Harvard cannot be so ignorant of the laws of physics, chemistry, and biology which reasonably estimate the disastrous consequences of such a war. Rather, I would suggest that Mr. Pipes denies what he knows because his hate and fear of the Soviet Union are even greater than his fear of nuclear war. His position is hardly devoid of the emotionalism which he suggests we avoid. Mr. Pipes's pseudo-rationalism is dangerous. What is needed is an appropriate blend of reason and emotion for dealing with the only problem in the world in which an accident or miscalculation could lead quickly to the death of most of us and the destruction of the very things for which such a war might be fought.

MORRIS A. LIPTON
Director, Biological Sciences
Research Center
University of North Carolina
Chapel Hill, North Carolina

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Richard Pipes moves quickly to address what he identifies as the "critical issue"—the cause of Soviet misbehavior. He dismisses at once the suggestion that the Russians may be overly concerned about national security as a consequence of foreign invasions, and he supports this dismissal by reference to a Russian study dated 1898.

But the study of history is not the same as participating in it or, worse, being the victim of it. One cannot remain unmoved by the enormity of the suffering resulting from the Nazi invasion of 1941, and Russians have been endlessly schooled in and reminded of its awesome reality ever since. But Mr. Pipes would have us believe that such a concern, springing logically from events of the recent past, is no more than the musing of American "dilettantes." Surely the exploration of such a "critical issue" is deserving of greater empathetic insight.

But his speculation on the source of Soviet misbehavior is not what one might have expected from an observer trained in scholarship. By ignoring the study of history, political philosophy, social psychology, and the more generally accepted principles of introspective psychology and psychoanalysis, Mr. Pipes has brought no more understanding to this issue than one would

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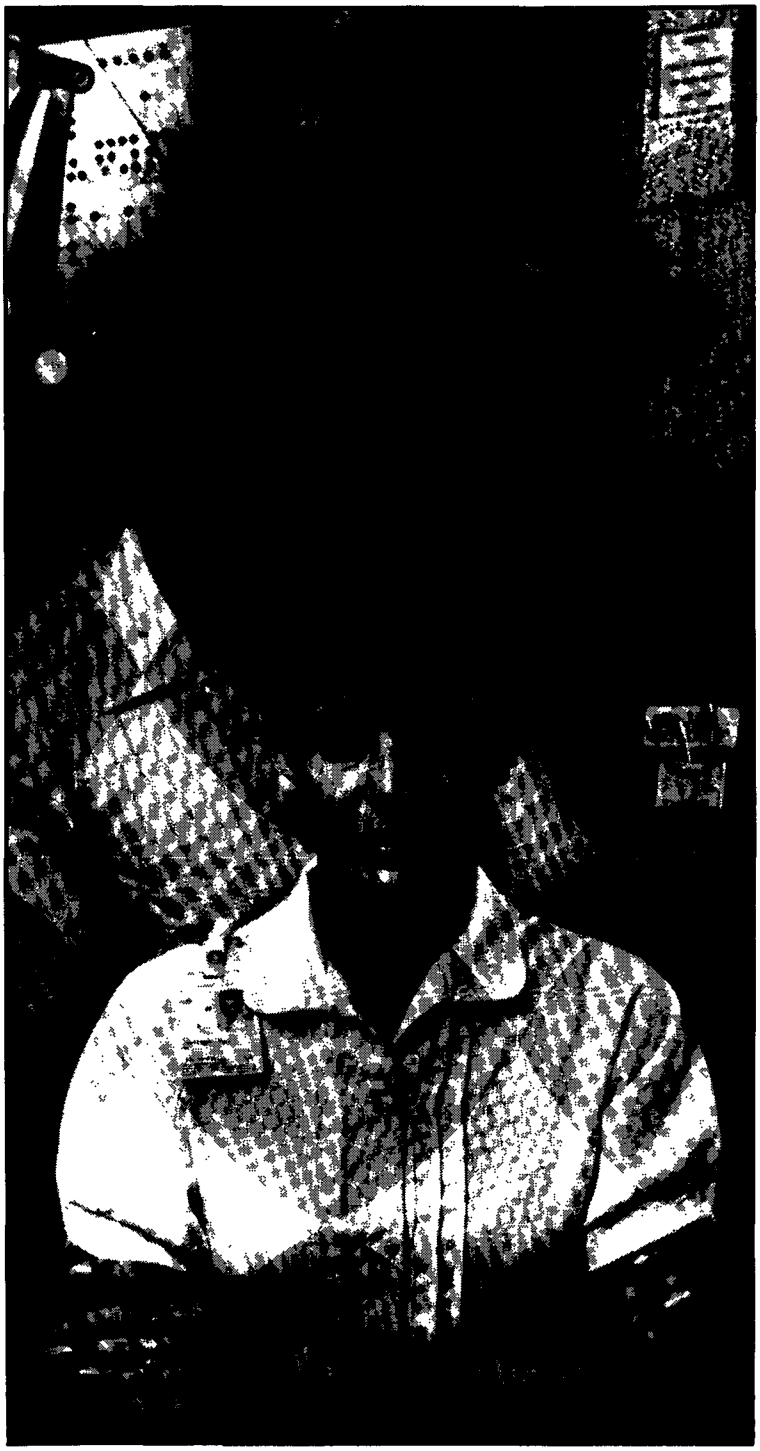

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have brought to bear on it from the perspective of the Middle Ages. Rather than exploring causes "rooted in Russian geography and history, others in Marxist-Leninist theory and practice," he spurns his own suggested path of historical overview for which he is professionally qualified and in its place gratuitously selects the narrowest cause possible. In short, the cause of the Soviets' bad behavior, according to Mr. Pipes, is that bad people are in command. And as the outcome of his harsh judgment he has a terrible punishment in store for them.

He recommends that the United States renounce the "barbaric" policy of retaliatory strikes aimed at the Russian civilian population. He turns to concentrate instead on "the true culprits of such aggression, the Soviet elite and its armed forces." He informs us that there are between 10,000 and 20,000 targets of political and military significance in the Soviet Union, and that the United States must possess sufficient warheads in its nuclear arsenal to destroy each and every one of them after absorbing a Soviet first strike—"this capability alone will provide a deterrent credible to Moscow." Nonsense. Sufficiency in terms of deterring a deliberate first strike on the part of rational men—how to deter the crazies is an altogether different matter—should be defined as no more than that which would, in fact, deter, plus a bit extra as some cushion for error. Would not the destruction of 500 of the largest cities suffice? But Mr. Pipes insists that we not think in terms of cities —that would be not only barbaric but "futile" (?)—and instead substitutes political and military objectives numbering in the tens of thousands. But wait; just what are these "objectives of political and military significance" *after* the Soviets have launched their first strike? I would suggest there would then be no military objectives left to target. They would have been already employed. Silos and submarines whose missiles have been launched, airfields whose bombers are in arctic airspace, and the command-and-control centers which coordinated these activities all become the refuse of this dismal scenario. Like so many bits of disposable packaging, they are not to be confused with what they previously contained; thus they possess no further military potential. Obviously there is no great purpose to be served in the mass destruction of empty launchers, and no reason to suspect that the Soviets would have kept significant numbers of missiles in reserve. Their first strike would not be exercised with restraint but with gusto; if it does not succeed as a knock-out punch with the first blow, they then must suffer the awesome consequences of its failure.

And just what is meant by objectives of "political significance"? Beyond wasting the Kremlin, are we to target bureaucrats all over the Russian mainland on their way home to dinner? Or have we developed a warhead capable of distinguishing commissars from common folk? Of course not. The political "objective" is Marxist domination, repression, and control. But these political elements are the warp and weft of contemporary Soviet life. It would be impossible to extricate them from their human surroundings to be set up as theoretical targets far from the cities we would presumably refrain from attacking.

Once we place Mr. Pipes's blueprint for retaliatory attack under a bright light it melts like soft wax, and what emerges from the puddle is the specter of the very horror he would abjure: the mass destruction of Russian cities. There would be nothing else left to target. Military ones would have disappeared by means of their previous employment, and "political" ones are merely the sanitizing euphemism for the cities.

In the middle of all this he slips in the bogus cue that "... the U.S. has no first-strike doctrine or capability whereas the Soviet side has both." We have no first-strike capability? This humble disclaimer is patently false. Far from lacking such capability, we are its proud inventor. We were the first to create a large nuclear force and deploy missiles abroad in the early 60's. We were first in highly accurate warheads and long-range cruise missiles, first in MIRVed missiles, first in placing the world's most accurate missiles ten minutes from the other side's command-and-control centers—a vital element in any first-strike scenario—and we are now busily engaged in the development and deployment of an across-the-board first-strike triad. How else can one view the MX missile, Trident submarines with new missiles of first-strike accuracy, the B-1 bomber, the Stealth bomber, and the many thousands of cruise missiles being deployed throughout our three military branches? Doctrines aside, first-strike capability is a thing we have aplenty, and from the Soviets' viewpoint it is their task to try their damnedest to match it. To insist that they have the capability we lack is contrary to the factual record. Why this attempt, irrelevant to the paragraph in which it is placed, to establish through suggestion our innocence in these matters?

A pattern is emerging from all this, but to complete it a closing element is required both to insure its credibility to the reader as well as to reveal its essential characteristic. And this element is persuasively provided by the proffered example. This consists of the "... most shocking instance of the contribution that Western technology has made to Soviet military capabilities...." It is the tale of the Soviets' requirement for ball bearings, made evident in 1959-60, and their lack of machinery to produce the large quantities necessary for their missile-guidance systems. Are we to believe what is implied? That (a) while they could define their requirements in 1959, and (b) knew that the technical problems of manufacture had been solved, yet (c) twenty-five years later, they *still* would be incapable of producing their own? Presumably what a technologically advanced country cannot imitate in twenty-five years is effectively beyond its grasp forever. Ball bearings? Is there something systemic in the Soviets' machine-design capability that closes them off for all time from matching the skills of the Bryant Chucking Grinder Company of Springfield, Vermont? Not likely. It is difficult to believe that the present circumstances of nuclear balance are in any way different from what they would have been had we continued to deny export permits for this equipment.

The pattern is now complete. It is a paradigm of childhood fantasy expressed in the familiar elements of the fairy tale. The Soviet Union is run by wicked men. Taken as a whole they represent the witch, the bad wolf. Their wickedness is endemic—it will not change or be modified. The punishment they deserve is no less than the cataclysmic annihilation of their evil empire. We, on the other hand, are as innocent as Little Red Riding

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Hood, constantly tempted, as was Snow White with the seductive apple, by their wily offers of peaceful intercourse.

The problem is not that Mr. Pipes is dead wrong. He is in some measure correct. The problem resides in the gaps between his perceptions and the nature of the real world. While the gaps may be small, as in a poster whose colors are only slightly out of register, the resulting image becomes badly distorted—and a poor source for guidance. It is in these out-of-register areas that the fairy-tale elements enter the scene.

Bruno Bettelheim writes, in *The Uses of Enchantment:*

> Only if a fairy tale met the conscious and unconscious requirements of many people was it repeatedly retold, and listened to with great interest.... The wild and destructive wolf stands for all asocial, unconscious, devouring powers against which one must learn to protect oneself, and which one can defeat through the strength of one's ego.... The wolf's badness is something the young child recognizes within himself: his wish to devour, and its consequence—the anxiety about possibly suffering such a fate himself. So the wolf is an externalization, a projection of the child's badness.... Whatever our age, only a story conforming to the principles underlying our thought processes carries conviction for us.

Mr. Pipes is well informed, but his presentation fails to survive logical examination. Why should such a learned man go so wrong? One possible explanation is that he has attempted to force-fit elements of the real world into the template shapes of his uniquely personal perceptions—the inevitable exercise of those who lack the empathetic skills essential to objectivity. But he writes persuasively, and unless we read very carefully we may be convinced that his view is the one with which we must deal, along with his recommendations for response. But if we wish to instruct others how to cope we surely must first learn to cope with ourselves, or we risk tainting our instructions with our own secret longings.

RICHARD MAZER

New York City

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

The first part of Richard Pipes's article contains more of theology than of objective appraisal. Where they do not support his strategic preconceptions, both recalcitrant facts and alternative interpretations of events are resolutely ignored....

Mr. Pipes's analysis of the "verification" problem is characteristically subjective; it is also weak. At one point he wonders whether "... the bulk of Soviet ICBM's intended for use is concealed, to be launched in wartime from soft pads, such as sheds and other places of storage, beyond the range of observation." In rebuttal, it must be stated that if the ratio of such secret deployments to known deployments were small, they would be strategically irrelevant, except at a late stage of massive arms reductions. Further, the likelihood of such deployments being discovered by U.S. intelligence must increase, at least in direct proportion to their size; strategically relevant hidden arsenals could not be kept hidden for long. Since his days as the leader of Vice President Bush's team of analysts in 1975-76, Mr. Pipes has never shown much confidence in the reliability of CIA data where they conflict with his own dogma; ... perhaps this is the explanation for what appears, at first glance, to be mathematical naiveté.

Finally, if even one such concealment were discovered, Soviet strategists would find themselves eternally at the mercy of American "worst-case" scenarists who would feel obligated to race against imagined Soviet arsenals as well as known ones. The Soviets would then be compelled to place an ICBM beneath every outhouse in Siberia whether they wished to or not. Mr. Pipes's argument leads, in short, practically to a *reductio ad absurdum*.

Mr. Pipes accuses the Soviets of two-facedness on the issue of whether or not theater-ballistic missiles deployed in Western Europe should be considered "strategic weapons." Leaving aside the semantics of SALT and START treaty language, the following fact must be recognized: European-based Pershing 2's, with their extremely short flight times, under the sole control of U.S. commanders, constitute a threat of decapitation to the Soviet high command which is not reciprocated for the U.S. by Soviet SS-20 deployments. Rather, the parallel is to recent Soviet SSBN movements that have put our own central-command authority in an analogous position, a fact conveniently glossed over by the Reagan administration. If the Soviets were to deploy SS-20's in Cuba, how would Mr. Pipes wish to "define" them? The deadly pressure these short-flight-time missiles put on command-and-control facilities, by forcing a reduction in negative and redundant controls and by encouraging predelegated launch authority or launch-on-warning, almost justifies putting them in the "superstrategic" class. Their existence dramatically reduces the security of both sides. The requirements of extended deterrence would be better served by upgrading, if need be, the SSBN force assigned to the Supreme Allied Commander in Europe.

In this regard, a response must be made to the following statement of Mr. Pipes: "It should be made eminently clear to these people [the Soviet leaders] that if they should ever dare to carry out their strategic plans and fire nuclear missiles in anger, they and their families will perish." If Mr. Pipes feels that we are buying better deterrence by shoving Pershing 2's down the Soviet leaders' throats, he is quite wrong. Fear, not anger, is the mother of preemption; it also tends to encourage bad accidents.

Finally, we come to Mr. Pipes's account of recent activities in the ABM field. Here he says: "Should such a development take place [improvements in Soviet ABM systems], it would pose a serious threat to U.S. security. Opposition to nuclear defenses on the grounds that they are 'destabilizing' should go the way of the advocacy of mutual assured destruction (MAD), whose ill-begotten child it is." Under every interpretation but one, these two sentences are simply inconsistent with each other. The (barely) viable interpretation reads: American ABM systems are not destabilizing; Soviet ABM systems *are*....

Such a formulation can be rescued from incoherence only on the following assumption: in general, Soviet defense planners neither fear nor respect what American planners do. This veiled theme, which runs like a common thread through most of Mr. Pipes's arguments, both in this article and elsewhere, begs for a psychological explanation. Since Mr. Pipes has not hesitated to diagnose the malady of the Western "collective unconscious," perhaps he would not think it amiss if one were to inquire after his own inner motivations.

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Mr. Pipes was born in a nation whose power-relationship with the Soviet Union was, and still is, extremely lopsided. I am speaking of Poland, of course, and the Soviet Union clearly does not fear Poland (except to the limited extent that events in Poland reverberate in Western Europe). Mr. Pipes is now an American scholar and an important figure in American defense planning, yet he carries with him what can only be described as an atavistic obsession with Soviet dominance, totally inappropriate to his adult environment. In this he is not alone (one thinks also of Zbigniew Brzezinski); nor can he really be blamed, for most of us carry the prejudices of our youth to our graves. Native-born Americans, however, should feel dismay whenever they find their own thinking in convergence with his.

Parity is a fact, because any two infinite things are equal to each other, and the destructive power of the U.S. and Soviet arsenals is (effectively) infinite. The recent "nuclear-winter" scenario has demonstrated this beyond cavil. Nor do questions of the credibility of our political will to use such weapons have nearly the significance Mr. Pipes attributed to them in his earlier article in COMMENTARY ["Why the Soviet Union Thinks It Could Fight and Win a Nuclear War," July 1977].

The intractable vulnerability of command / communications links can only drive both sides to extensive predelegation and decentralization of command authority, in effect giving these weapons a life of their own. Recent defense directives such as PD-49 and NSDD-13 are thus revealed to be little more than Byzantine fairy tales. It is a dangerous distortion of reality not to recognize Soviet fear for what it is, because then, in our own search for security, we will tend to take unwitting actions which only increase that fear. The ultimate result of the ensuing action-reaction cycle can only be—a reenactment of August 1914. The consequences of such a replay, however, will be several orders of magnitude greater than the original.

KARL WESSEL
Rancho Palos Verdes, California

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Richard Pipes's analysis of the cause and cure of Soviet misbehavior, like much of his other work, strikes me as encapsulating one central flaw in a body of otherwise excellent reasoning. It is this: if Moscow really believes it could win a nuclear war with the United States ("... the U.S. has no first-strike doctrine or capability whereas the Soviet side has both"), why has it not launched one? Surely the answer is that, just as the Soviet leadership—as Mr. Pipes correctly says—considers that a major, protracted conventional war would subject the Soviet Union to intolerable stresses, as World War I did to czarist Russia, so it believes that a nuclear war with the United States would threaten the Soviet Union with unacceptable damage, if not total destruction. Evidently mutual deterrence is still alive and well, although it requires eternal vigilance and frequent maintenance on the American side.

Mr. Pipes is wrong in saying that Soviet behavior has never been influenced by nuclear threats; it was when the threats were uttered by John Foster Dulles.

HAROLD C. HINTON
George Washington University
Washington, D.C.

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Small wonder that liberal American Sovietologists are apologists for Communism and advocates of appeasement. But what is disturbing about some conservative scholars is that their staunch and sound anti-Communism is quite often mixed with Russophobia. They are either unable or unwilling to make a distinction between Russia and the Soviet Union or Russians and Soviets. They claim that the Soviet regime is rooted in Russian history and that Great Russian nationalism is one of the reasons for Soviet aggressiveness. In a word, Russian spells evil.

In his article, Richard Pipes takes a step forward in understanding the real nature of the Soviet threat.... Yet he has not completely abandoned his contention that Soviet imperialism is a continuation of old Russia's imperialism.... No one has ever tried to deny the fact that old Russia was imperialistic. But the point is that every European power at that time was imperialistic, including small nations like Portugal and Holland. Expansionism and colonialism were a way of life, with Russia no better and no worse than other nations....

Imperial Russia, like any other European power, pursued certain political, economic, and nationalistic interests in a certain geographic area but never strove for world domination and never posed a global threat. The Russian presence in Finland, Poland, and Central Asia was not, of course, a blessing for the peoples of those countries, but it was not destructive, either. Soviet imperialism (which should be called more exactly Soviet gangsterism and terrorism) is an absolutely new phenomenon; it is not at all political, economic, or nationalistic; it has nothing to do with the interests of the country....

The Bolshevik coup d'état in 1917 was both a national and an international disaster.... Now, after sixty-seven years of Soviet power, Communism has proved completely bankrupt as a philosophy and as a social and economic system. In the confrontation between the free world and Communism, the Russian people, as well as all the enslaved peoples in the Soviet bloc, are on the side of the West. So the cornerstone of any long-term strategy for the West must be to help the people of Russia bring down the Soviet regime and establish a free Russia.... How to accomplish this is a different topic.

JOSEPH IOFFE
St. Paul, Minnesota

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Richard Pipes's article is simultaneously excellent and disappointing. Its analysis of the West's military, political, and economic posture vis-à-vis the Soviet Union is clear and insightful, but the promise of the article's title has not been met.

The essence of the article is that Western delinquencies facilitate Soviet repression of "forces within the Communist bloc which are working for a change of the system." The unarticulated but necessary implication is that the policy of containment is fundamentally sound; its execution has simply gone awry. . . . Ultimately, "the West cannot destabilize the Soviet Union"—but we should at least stop doing things which prejudice hoped-for internal Soviet changes....

In short, as good as Mr. Pipes's article is in dissecting Western shortcomings in the three areas addressed, it does not offer any philosophical alternative to a policy whose very failures now require that, almost forty years after its inception, articles such as this be published....

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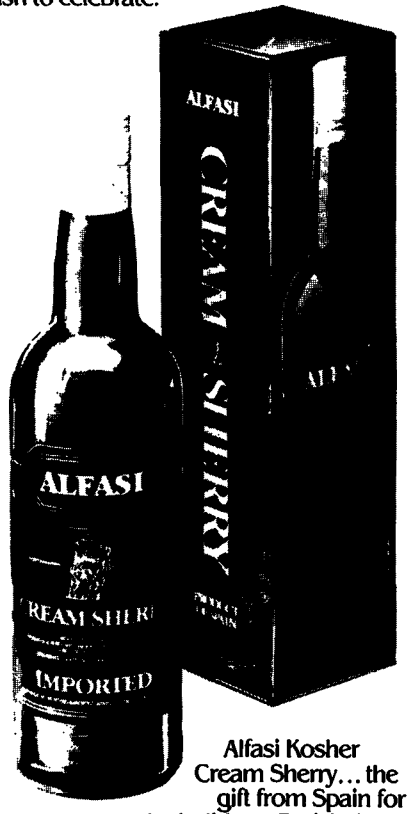

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Some hard questions must be asked: . . . Can anyone honestly believe that the circumstances which are so cogently recited in the article are going to change? When? How? Why?

Why should the cumulative momentum of half a century of Western economic support of the Soviet Union abruptly about-face? . . .

How can a policy, having failed when pursued during the peak of America's worldwide economic and military influence, now be considered viable under circumstances in which the geopolitical realities have so fundamentally changed? . . .

A realistic Western strategy toward the USSR must go a few steps beyond acting upon the urgencies that Mr. Pipes identifies. . . . There must be a change of intent toward the Soviet Union. . . .

Such a change of focus requires two things. First, we must face *and accept* the realities of democratic society, with all its vested interests, mercurial public opinion, political rivalries, and other characteristics that have and will continue to subvert the policy of containment. . . .

Second, we should divest ourselves of the self-imposed rule that international politics is basically a regulatory affair, concerned with preserving the status quo. This requires a forthright acknowledgment that the two mutually inconsistent philosophies of the Western democracies and the Soviet bloc cannot coexist in perpetuity. The thrust of Soviet ideology, foreign policy, and military strategy has been and remains offensive. The thrust of American foreign policy and military strategy (we profess no ideology) has been and remains defensive. Moscow specifically rejects compromise, restraint, and convergence. We put our faith in arms control, reason, and negotiation. Soviet policy is dynamic, outgoing, and aggressive. Our "policy" is regulatory, concerned with relations between states and with stabilizing those relations. We try to preserve; Moscow revolutionizes. We react to events; Moscow seeks to govern them. One or the other philosophy—and way of life—must sooner or later give way. . . .

There was an allusion to such a realignment of American thinking in Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger's early congressional testimony: ". . . We must not pursue a defensive strategy that anticipates a point-by-point response to [aggressive Soviet] actions, but rather one which permits us to take full advantage of Soviet vulnerability."

Much to his credit, Mr. Pipes recognizes this by recommending increased radio and telecommunications addressed to the Communist bloc. Unfortunately, however, neither this administration, nor Mr. Pipes, nor Western policymakers generally have expanded their consideration of the issue, perhaps because the issue itself is all too often framed (as Mr. Pipes himself frames it) in terms of "destabilizing" the Soviet Union. . . . The issue then becomes easily perverted and degenerates into a rhetorical knee-jerk response: "So what should we do? Send in the Marines?" This, or a similar retort, is usually followed in quick succession with a reference to the 1956 Hungarian uprising as an example of the futility and suicidal nature of hypothetical Western action. . . .

The ultimate question must be whether the West is prepared to stop Soviet imperialism by exploiting the fundamental vulnerabilities within the Soviet network. . . . A popular argument against such a policy is that internal crises within the USSR only fuel Soviet aggressiveness overseas, which itself serves as an outlet for domestic frustrations. . . .

The necessary corollary to this argument is that Soviet aggression outside its borders can be lessened by assisting the Kremlin in its struggle to fight its way out of a domestic quagmire. Eliminate internal frustrations and the reason for foreign adventures disappears. Advocates of the argument would probably deny that America should alleviate Moscow's problems on the home front if the question were posed directly, but say as much by propounding this theory. Ironically, in our half-hearted implementation of containment, we have for decades mitigated the effects of Soviet domestic problems. To no avail. . . .

One could as easily, and with more convincing logic, assert that internal difficulties would require Moscow to concentrate on them instead of compounding matters by diverting resources abroad.

The theory reverses the causal relationship. We are to believe that an increasingly sclerotic Soviet economy during the last ten years has caused a fourfold increase in Soviet military spending, instead of vice versa.

To argue that the Kremlin must look abroad in order to divert/mollify/appease its citizenry is to presume an accountability to a constituency, hardly a characteristic of a totalitarian state. This theory, however, would then require that the domestic failures be addressed, and not that Nicaragua be armed. How, exactly, is the frustration of a collective farm worker mollified upon learning that Soviet troops are in Afghanistan? Reports from the Soviet Union state the opposite.

We must, thus, sooner or later decide whether it is in our interest to preserve the status quo in the world, in the greater part of Europe, and within the Soviet Union. . . .

As early as 1958, when the demography of the Soviet Union had not yet shifted in favor of the non-Russian nations, Mr. Pipes observed that it came as a surprise to most people to learn that there were more Turks in the Soviet Union than in Turkey, and more Muslims than in the United Arab Republic. Indeed, it is extraordinary that Russian domination of more than one-third of the total territory of Asia has continued largely to escape the notice of the peoples of non-Soviet Asia and Africa.

Not surprisingly, the nationalities issue in the Soviet Union is a historically permanent operating factor. It is an integral part of Soviet domestic and, increasingly, foreign policies. It plays a pivotal role in shaping such diverse Soviet decision-making processes as capital and labor allocations, energy and military spending, military conscription, East/West relations, as well as relations with China. . . .

Since the founding of the United Nations (by, among others, two Soviet Republics) the number of independent states in the world has increased threefold. Can free choice and self-determination, which today are so elemental in any society, . . . have no application within Soviet borders?

At the beginning of his article, Mr. Pipes quotes Sun Tzu to the effect that the "acme of skill" is to attack the enemy's strategy. More sublime still is to subdue your adversary by implementing against him his own strategy against you. That strategy was conveniently recited in the New York *Times* by Yuri Kornilov, political correspondent of *Tass*, soon after President Reagan's inauguration. After exhorting a "maximum effort to prevent détente from collapsing

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and mankind from sliding down toward a nuclear holocaust," Kornilov said:

> It seems obvious that the growing desire of peoples for national liberation, independence, economic and social progress is an inevitable and natural process that one can neither "repeal" nor "ban," no matter how much some people may wish it. To try to present things as though the changes at work on our planet are the result of somebody's "ill will" means being unable to grasp the meaning of events.

PETER PALUCH
Harvard University
Ukrainian Studies Fund
Cambridge, Massachusetts

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

In his otherwise excellent article, Richard Pipes makes the point that a policy of rewards and punishments will not induce good Soviet behavior as long as the Kremlin's basic motivation is not understood. However, this needs further elaboration.... During the Korean war, there was tremendous indignation in this country because Britain and France were trading with Red China, which was in turn helping the North Koreans. Yet during the Vietnam war, at the same time that Johnson and Nixon were pouring troops into South Vietnam, they were encouraging American trade with our former glorious Soviet ally, which was in turn supplying North Vietnam. I wish that someone who can understand the logic of a policy like this would explain it to me.

But again, Mr. Pipes's basic point applies: the reason for the capricious application of sanctions is that Soviet motivation is not understood.

W. S. HAMMA
Reno, Nevada

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Richard Pipes is a mentor to those of us who believe that the Soviet threat is real and not imagined, and his article, "How to Cope With the Soviet Threat," is great. I am especially thankful to him for writing: "It is essential for the West not to allow Moscow to insinuate itself into its domestic politics and not to give it any opportunity for exploiting the 'rifts' in the enemy camp which Lenin regarded as the prime objective of his political strategy." It is rare that one finds such insightful understanding from anyone who has not been a Marxist-Leninist. Mr. Pipes is on target when he writes about "rifts" in the pro-freedom bloc of nations....

Too many Americans continue to deceive themselves that Leninists are other than what they claim to be: totalitarians. I would add that Lenin also wrote to the Bolsheviks: "While you lack the strength to do away with bourgeois parliaments and every other type of reactionary institution, you must work with them."

PHILLIP ABBOTT LUCE
Chairman, Americans for a Sound Foreign Policy
Washington, D.C.

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

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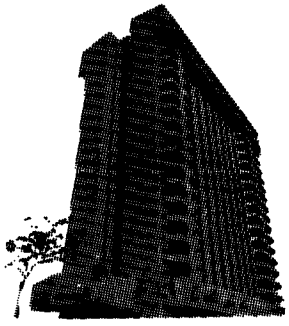

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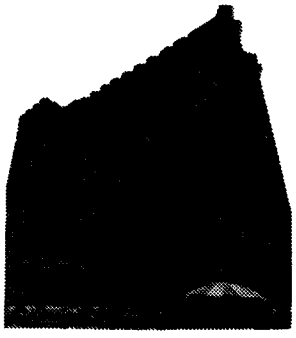

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have had difficulty understanding the nature of the Soviet threat to their very existence. Richard Pipes is to be congratulated for explaining it so well in his article. He also shows, using the magnificent work of Anthony Sutton, what is at the core of socialist strength—capitalism, that is, mainly American help which since 1921 has succeeded in establishing the Communist monster. The solution obviously is what President Reagan started—to stop all economic aid to the Soviets. The problem is how the Soviets can hurt us in the meantime: by using nuclear weapons to gain immediate victory. This is the greatest threat ever faced by Western society. Mr. Pipes's solution . . . is the immediate growth of the U.S. nuclear arsenal. There is simply no other answer. What this would do to the American economy is another serious matter, but as a British general once said: "The greatest social service a nation can do for itself is caring for its security." A nation that cannot defend itself against all odds simply will not survive. . . .

ODED YINON

Jerusalem, Israel

RICHARD PIPES writes:

My attempt to identify in mankind's collective unconscious antecedents of the nuclear terror which the Soviet Union exploits for its own purposes leads Morris A. Lipton to the conclusion that I dismiss "the threat of nuclear war." This charge is a non sequitur. My references to biblical and similar anticipations of nuclear holocaust were intended to explain human reactions to the threat of nuclear war, not the threat itself, which I consider very real. Nor did I anywhere in the article advocate policies that would "result in the collapse of the intransigent Soviet system": in fact, I explicitly stated that "the West cannot destabilize the Soviet Union." The thrust of my argument was that we ought to encourage internal forces already at work in the Communist bloc to accomplish change, which I envision as a reform, not a collapse, of its political and economic system. It is distressing that a scientist who holds responsible academic and administrative positions at a major university should prove unable to read a text without distorting it to suit his political preferences.

Richard Mazer's letter consists of a burst of random assertions, some irrelevant, some uninformed. I referred to a "Russian study dated 1898" in order to dispel a prevalent belief that Soviet aggression is a response to centuries of invasion of the Russian homeland. This study, which the passage of time has not rendered obsolete, demonstrated statistically that for every invasion which Russia had experienced in the 18th and 19th centuries it had committed eighteen acts of aggression against its neighbors. The significance of this information should be obvious.

The 20 million casualties which the citizens of the Soviet Union suffered in World War II (a war made possible, be it noted, by the Soviet pact with Hitler) are less than half the number of casualties that the Soviet government is estimated to have inflicted on its own people through starvation, executions, deportations, etc. Even so, the memory of the horrors of war has not inhibited Moscow from recently dispatching over 100,000 of its young men to Afghanistan to kill and be killed. The trauma of World War II constitutes a poor basis for crediting the Politburo with peaceful intentions.

Mr. Mazer is simply misinformed if he believes that after launching a first strike the USSR "would have no military objectives left to target." For one, simple calculations show that, given the existence of MIRV's, the Soviet Strategic Forces would need to employ only a fraction of their ICBM's and SLBM's in a first strike against U.S. targets: the bulk of Soviet missiles would be held in reserve in order either to prevent a U.S. response or to retaliate for it. Secondly, ICBM's and SLBM's represent, of course, only one segment of the Soviet military establishment, which also includes rockets of intermediate range, not to speak of a formidable army, navy, and air force—all "military objectives" in their own right. As for the statement that "political targets" must mean "bureaucrats . . . on their way home to dinner," I can think of no civil way to respond to it.

Mr. Mazer's views of alleged U.S. "first-strike" plans are as wide of the mark as is his statement that the Soviets are doing their "damnedest" to try "to match" the American nuclear build-up. When the Soviets initiated their anti-satellite (ASAT) program in 1968, what comparable U.S. program were they trying to match, inasmuch as the United States did not begin work on ASAT's until nine years later? Whatever it is that inspired Moscow's deployment of anti-ballistic-missile defenses around Moscow, it could not have been the U.S. example, since we have not deployed such a system to this day. The same applies to Soviet "heavy" missiles like the SS-18. With a threefold advantage in the throw-weight of strategic missiles and a fivefold one in the throw-weight of theater rockets, Moscow need hardly strain to "match" its potential opponent: rather, it is incumbent upon us to do so.

To Karl Wessel I shall respond briefly:

(1) He overestimates the ability of the U.S. to detect concealed Soviet objects. (2) I have never questioned "CIA data" on Soviet missiles: since I own no satellites, like everyone else I rely on the figures provided by the CIA. (3) American Pershing 2's can reach Soviet territory not in "extremely short flight times," but at the same speed it takes Soviet SS-20's to strike NATO territory where we have over 300,000 troops and allies whom we are treaty-bound to defend. (4) The U.S. has no ABM system deployed whereas the Soviet Union does—"destabilization" occurs when one side enjoys a monopoly on defensive systems. (5) *Ad-hominem* arguments belong in the intellectual gutter; I normally ignore them. Here, however, let me state that my having been born in Poland no more affects my attitude toward Communism (which began to interest me only after I came to this country) than my being a Jew determines my feelings toward Nazism. My total ignorance of Mr. Wessel's "native-born" background as well as his "inner motivations" would in any event prevent me from attributing personal reasons for his Soviet apologias even if I had the taste for such contemptible polemics.

Harold C. Hinton wonders why, if the Soviet Union really believes it could win a nuclear war with the United States, does it refrain from launching a nuclear strike. The answer is that victory in such a war would be exceedingly costly. The USSR views nuclear war as a last resort, preferring to expand by means of political attrition and conventional proxy wars.

Joseph Ioffe chides me for failing to distinguish the Soviet regime from its Russian predecessor. He

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sees Soviet imperialism as "an altogether new phenomenon," that is, one without roots in the past of Russia or any other country. There exists a scientific maxim, *natura non facit saltum*—"nature makes no leap." The same holds true of human affairs. History knows no "absolutely new" phenomena—its entire effort goes into explaining events and processes in terms of their antecedents. The very notion that a people with a thousand-year-old history could, in one single day—October 26, 1917, to be precise—totally break with its past and bring into being something entirely unprecedented surely belongs to the realm of fairy tales.

I might add that the Soviet establishment itself does not share Mr. Ioffe's sense of discontinuity with the past. A cursory glance at Soviet historical works will indicate to him that the regime proudly claims the entire heritage of czarist imperialism. Current Soviet historical literature depicts every war the czars ever waged as defensive, and every one of their conquests as justified.

I fail to understand Peter Paluch's objection since he and I seem to be in agreement. His complaints about the inability of democracies to carry out a consistent policy toward the Soviet Union are mine also. As for the need to "exploit Soviet weaknesses," I was under the impression that this is what my article was all about.

Neoconservatism

To the Editor of Commentary:

James Nuechterlein paints a fair and accurate picture of Irving Kristol's thinking in his "Neoconservatism and Irving Kristol" [August]. But he will find that others who have in recent years been dubbed "neoconservatives," and who might be prepared to accept that label, will not agree with the generalizations he has offered about them.

According to Mr. Nuechterlein, "neoconservatism is . . . a movement of disillusioned leftists . . . who [have] turned from their accustomed radicalism or Left-liberalism. . . ." He suggests that "traditional liberals" reappraised their views in the 1960's and "began to suspect that liberalism's vulnerability lay deeper than a momentary failure of will." They attempted, "through such organizations as the Coalition for a Democratic Majority (CDM), to win the Democrats and the liberal community in general over to their way of thinking" and failed. "What remains unclear," Mr. Nuechterlein observes, "is where the neoconservatives, having arrived at a rather different location than they first set out for, go from here."

As one who is willing to accept the "neoconservative" label and who moves in a circle of other neoconservatives, let me say that we are not watered-down or less clear-thinking Irving Kristols. Our political outlook was distinct from Irving Kristol's at the outset and, as distinct from Irving Kristol's, our outlook has not basically changed. As a matter of fact, our continued adherence to precepts held close to half a century ago is what characterizes us most poignantly.

According to present mythology, as reflected in Mr. Nuechterlein's article, the politics of 1940 at CCNY involved principally the battles of Trotskyists against Stalinists, with a few Norman Thomas Socialists thrown in for good measure. The non-persons in this analysis are the non-Marxist New Dealers. They were then a not-so-silent majority, who argued vociferously against the points of view emanating from the various Marxist denominations. I happen to have been one of those CCNY New Dealers. Despised by the Marxists as illiterates in the field of political ideology, we stood, first of all, for opposition by deed as well as by word to all forms of totalitarianism. That meant support of the FDR foreign and defense policies, including the draft and aid to the Allies. Though we considered Hitler the principal enemy of democracy, the Soviet Union's involuntary entry into the war on the side of the Allies did not blind us to the realities of Stalinism. We also continued to oppose Communists in their domestic activities, including their various front organizations.

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On economic questions we supported the pragmatism of the New Deal: social security, work relief, a minimum wage, a chance for labor to organize. On this latter point, we did not believe that it was the task of an intellectual elite to enlighten the working class and lead it toward the revolution. We simply sympathized with men such as Philip Murray, Jim Carey, and Walter Reuther, who organized the unorganized while fighting off the efforts of Stalinists to dominate the newly-created CIO. Social issues were not debated at length in those days, but if asked, we would have affirmed our beliefs in the family, hard work, education, personal honesty, fairness, respect for the right of others to express their point of view, etc. For all that, our Marxist fellow-students derided us as benighted protectors of the capitalist status quo, and sometimes as social fascists (the Stalinist term) and labor fakers (the Trotskyist term).

What characterized us all was a deep interest in government and a commitment to the near- and intermediate-term solution of what we perceived to be problems requiring solution at the governmental level. What we lacked was an ideological construct for long-term solutions, for a nirvana according to the teachings of Karl Marx or any other social philosopher.

In the post-World War II period we saw our ideas on foreign and domestic policy guide the Democratic party program. But then came the 1960's. Contrary to Mr. Nuechterlein, we did not "reappraise" our beliefs. We stood by them. We continued to believe in an internationalist policy, for the United States to remain in its role as leader of the free world. We continued to believe in an adequate defense, in a color-blind society, in representative rather than so-called "participatory" democracy. We continued to believe in the work ethic and began to question a system that permitted the growth of welfare rolls, the "dole" which the New Deal had rejected.

While we, the latter-day neoconservatives, did not reappraise our positions, others who had once adhered to our ideas did. More often than not under the influence of their own children, they repudiated our ideals one by one. They became isolationist or pacifist, tolerant of or even apologists for totalitarians, supporters of preferences based on race, elitist in their attitudes toward what they viewed as "Middle America." As Mr. Nuechterlein correctly notes, it is this group of 60's and 70's liberals which achieved dominance in the institutions with which we had been associated: in academia, in literary circles, and ultimately in the Democratic party.

The Coalition for a Democratic Majority, again contrary to Mr. Nuechterlein, was not formed to "win the Democrats and the liberal community in general over to [the neoconservative] way of thinking." CDM did not seek the ideological reconversion of those who espoused the liberal doctrine of the 60's and 70's. Instead, the organization, proceeding on the assumption that its views reflected the sentiments of a majority of Democratic voters, sought to recapture the leadership of the Democratic party through political mobilization of what it considered to be the party's silent majority. Why CDM failed would have to be the subject of another letter. Suffice it to say that it did fail.

Under the circumstances, we, who in 1984 still hold the views we held in our youth, find ourselves quite comfortable with Ronald Reagan, a man who comes from the very same political background that nurtured us, a pragmatist like us, above all a man deeply committed to what we consider now, as we did many years ago, the principal public-policy issue: defense of the free world. As distinct from Irving Kristol, we may still not have an overarching ideology, but we are comfortable with our basic precepts of government and a social order, with our pragmatic approach to public policy, an approach which, we believe, has stood the test of time.

RICHARD SCHIFTER
Bethesda, Maryland

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

In the 1972 preface to *On the Democratic Idea in America,* Irving Kristol acknowledges: "I had to discover for myself, uneasily and fumblingly, many things which a serious student of political philosophy—someone soundly versed in Aristotle's *Politics,* for example—might have known early on." My only quibble with James Nuechterlein is that he has not emphasized sufficiently that all Kristol has done is discover the ancient truths and the voice to make them heard today. Irving Kristol certainly would not be offended with the statement that there is nothing in his writings which is not in Aristotle. Since 1972 he may wish to add Plato.

MICHAEL W. GOLD
Richmond, Virginia

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

James Nuechterlein does not support his contention that Irving Kristol is a figure of intellectual significance or influence. In his article, Mr. Nuechterlein fails to: (1) make clear whether Kristol is a loner or a leader of a movement and, if the latter, who its prominent members are; (2) give a coherent definition of "neoconservatism"; (3) differentiate it from "neoliberalism"; or (4) adequately distinguish it from ordinary conservatism—old style or New Right.

Supposedly Irving Kristol parts company from "traditional" conservatives in his support for the welfare state. How then explain his support of Nixon in 1972 and Kemp and then Reagan in 1980?

Irving Kristol has merely taken the traditional journey from far Left to far Right with increasing age. He differs from his companions not in substance but in style—combining good writing with an absence of venom and self-righteousness.

JAMES S. OTTENBERG
New York City

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

. . . In Western society, the enduring strength of conservatism has been its ability to gather support from the generally more wealthy and the more powerful for whom the status quo is physically comfortable. The enduring strength of liberalism has been its ability (perhaps tendency would be more accurate) to discard the limitations of rigor in its quest for compassion in the social contract between citizens and their governments.

Neither conservatives nor liberals have a right to claim that they are the sole heirs and guardians of democracy. There have been times when society has been better served by each. What other social and political program than that of the liberals under Franklin Roosevelt would have better served the needs of the country in the 1930's? And if in the 70's our courts and Congress failed to some extent to distinguish between social policy and justice and between legislative and judicial process, who is to say that the

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country has not been wise to turn to conservatives to moderate these trends?

There have also been times when society has been poorly served by both liberals and conservatives. I think we may be at one such point in our history. Unfortunately, the issue is the nuclear arms race. We are being assured by the conservatives that nothing short of a continued expansion of weaponry and weapons systems will insure democratic survival in a world in which the Soviet establishment continues to exist. At the same time a large constituency, among which must surely be numbered a significant fraction of liberals, seems to think that we can insure democratic survival simply by opting out of the arms race.

The nuclear arms race *is* insane, but the preoccupation of both liberals and conservatives with showing how scurrilous the other side is makes it even more difficult for voices of reason to be heard. It was a rare pleasure therefore for COMMENTARY to open its pages some months ago to Jean-François Revel ["Can the Democracies Survive?," June] who, if more pessimistic about the chances of democratic survival than I think he needs to be, at least demonstrates a perspective scarcely observed in the doctrinaire attitudes so prevalent today.

ELLIOT CHARNEY
Bethesda, Maryland

JAMES NUECHTERLEIN writes:

I want to thank Richard Schifter for his thoughtful letter. I am sympathetic to much of what he says, but he seems to me to push a reasonable argument beyond its plausible limits. He says that neoconservatives of his persuasion have changed not at all over the last fifty years and that they retain the same pragmatic, melioristic, anti-totalitarian spirit that animated the New Deal. He argues in effect that he and his friends did not depart from liberalism, but that it (or what now passes under its name) departed from them. That is part of the truth, but it is not the whole truth.

I would concede that many, probably most, of today's neoconservatives began not on the radical Left but in the liberal Center (or Center-Left). Irving Kristol himself has conceded that most of his contemporaries at CCNY were "spontaneously sympathetic to the New Deal and FDR." And as I noted, Kristol's own radicalism lasted for only a short season. It quickly gave way to the moderate postwar liberalism that, as I further noted, provided the roots of the neoconservative impulse.

According to Mr. Schifter, those

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moderate liberals never changed their views. Other liberals—indeed, a majority of them—became radicalized, but those who formed the Coalition for a Democratic Majority held steadfast to the old New Deal faith.

I agree with Mr. Schifter that the liberals of the 60's moved Left, but I also think that he and his friends moved Right. I offer in evidence his statement that he and the people for whom he speaks "find ourselves quite comfortable with Ronald Reagan." Whatever one thinks of President Reagan's program, it seems to me incomprehensible to see it as an extension of the New Deal. The New Deal believed strongly in affirmative government. Mr. Reagan quite explicitly does not. There is nothing in the Reagan philosophy of the New Deal's social-democratic tinge; indeed, quite to the contrary. Put in the context of the New Deal/anti-New Deal conflicts of the 30's, Mr. Reagan's rhetoric comes down overwhelmingly on the anti-New Deal side. The issues are not all the same, of course, but the fundamental instincts have not changed. During the recent presidential campaign, those who wanted an extension of the New Deal had no choice but to vote for Walter Mondale. (I am speaking of domestic issues; I would agree with Mr. Schifter that in foreign affairs—which I explicitly excluded from my analysis—the situation is more complex.)

One can make a good case that the conditions of the 80's require us to rethink the pieties of the 30's, but it is precisely this rethinking that has turned a number of social democrats of fifty years ago into neoconservatives today. It is not enough to invoke "pragmatism." There are, after all, self-styled pragmatists located at virtually all points on the political spectrum. And Mr. Reagan's pragmatism differs considerably in substance and approach from that of the New Deal. Would Mr. Schifter really put Ronald Reagan in the same tradition as Philip Murray, Jim Carey, and Walter Reuther?

Irving Kristol may have stood to the Left of Mr. Schifter for a brief moment during their days at CCNY. But Mr. Schifter's own testimony persuades me that their paths since those days have not been all that dissimilar. The difference between them appears to me to have resided more in their differing perceptions of the significance of the political changes going on around them. And on that point, if I may be permitted to say so, Mr. Kristol's view would seem to have been the more discerning.

I would not dispute Irving Kristol's grounding in classical political theory, but I would question Michael W. Gold's assertion that there is nothing in Kristol's writings that cannot be found in Aristotle and Plato. The Greeks anticipated a great deal, but not everything. Modern industrial democracies encounter certain problems—those of scale, for example—that did not arise in the ancient *polis*.

James S. Ottenberg thinks he can dispose of Irving Kristol as a thinker by depicting his political odyssey as no more than a function of the aging process. It is difficult for anyone familiar with Kristol's writings to take such a notion seriously; one wonders if Mr. Ottenberg himself does, or if he is only indulging in ideological fencing. I could only answer Mr. Ottenberg's recitation of my article's presumed failures by repeating at tedious length an argument I have already made. I see no point in doing so; interested readers can compare Mr. Ottenberg's criticisms with what I wrote. In any case, Irving Kristol's writings do not need my support to establish their intellectual significance and influence. Any reasonably attentive reader or observer can discern that for himself.

I would certainly agree with Elliot Charney that neither liberals nor conservatives can rightly claim that they are "the sole heirs and guardians of democracy" and that there have been times when society has been better served by each. But I would not for a moment concede that the "enduring strength" of conservatism has been its ability to gather support from the wealthy and powerful. That may well have been conservatism's effect in certain times and places, but it is not at all the defining aspect of that form of conservatism to which I am sympathetic.

Journalists in Beirut

To the Editor of Commentary:

Ze'ev Chafets has reopened a two-year-old argument in "Beirut & the Great Media Cover-Up" [September], with a series of *ad-hominem* attacks on various American journalists. I have responded to the valid, and the less-than-valid, points he originally made in an article in the Washington *Post* that appeared on page A29 on March 4, 1982. Since Mr. Chafets has quoted selectively from the article in a way that unfortunately distorts its meaning, I invite your readers to read the entire article. . . .

Indeed, Mr. Chafets pays my article a compliment by relying on it for a good bit of the material he cites, such as his favorable treatment of Edward Cody's American exclusive on the Hama massacre and the coverage by Jonathan Randal of his being taken captive in the early days of the civil war in Beirut. Unfortunately, Mr. Chafets neglected to tell your readers that this material was first mentioned in my article. I will not speculate on the reason for this curious omission.

No reasonable person familiar with the stories I wrote from the Middle East in the early 1970's will accept his characterization of my attitude toward "the good name of the PLO" (his phrase). I have previously told Mr. Chafets that he clearly is unfamiliar with what I have written about the PLO, and he has never given me any reason to believe he has taken the trouble to read it. Nor has he bothered to discuss it with me.

Finally, readers interested in the relationship between the U.S. embassy and the PLO in Beirut as mentioned in Mr. Chafets's article may want to consult David Ignatius's page-one story on this subject in the *Wall Street Journal* on February 10, 1983. It is the most insightful treatment of that issue I have seen.

Jim Hoagland
Washington *Post*
Washington, D.C.

To the Editor of Commentary:

As a paid flack for the Israeli government, Ze'ev Chafets's job was to purvey propaganda, which he did with charm and efficiency. On leave, he is now seeking to purvey it for higher returns as an author. No wonder, then, that he should come up with yet another attempt to discredit journalists whose job has led them to report on the Palestine Liberation Organization and other Arab affairs. In so doing, he is continuing his career in advertising for Israel.

As one of those whose integrity is called into question, I can only respond that he is doing a poor job of it. His version of conditions in Beirut is so full of half-truths and

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plain errors that it would be tedious to list them. The Syrians did not intervene in the summer of 1976, for example. They entered eastern Lebanon early in the year. Only in November did they occupy Beirut. When they did, the population cheered. The "urban nightmare" cited by Mr. Chafets existed, all right, but it began later. It reached a high point of terror under Israeli bombs in the summer of 1982.

But such misinformation, not to say disinformation, is to be expected from Mr. Chafets. On the one hand, he has had no first-hand experience in Beirut that I know of. More importantly, his aim is not to get out the truth. It is, as it has been, to further the public-opinion goals of the Israeli government. That, after all, is his occupation. Any doubts on this score can be settled by the title of his book, *Double Vision: How the Press Distorts America's View of the Middle East*. Of course we in the U.S. press report a view of the Middle East that differs from that of the Israeli government. And from that of the Syrian government. And from that of the PLO.

Fundamentally, this is the problem with Mr. Chafets's approach. His often uninformed assumptions about PLO activities in Beirut were rarely reported as he perceived things, so we were guilty of cover-up. Barroom conversations at the Commodore Hotel about Salim Lawzi's murder never made it into print. Cover-up. No one ever found out for sure who killed Sean Toolan. Cover-up. (Actually, according to the best-informed version, Toolan indeed was killed by a Palestinian—a hit artist contracted by a Lebanese businessman whose wife got way too friendly with Toolan.)

A serious look at the Beirut press of 1975-82 would be welcome. The Syrians have a lot to account for during those years. So does the PLO. But I would advise anyone interested to skip Mr. Chafets and wait for a real book on the subject.

EDWARD CODY
Washington *Post*
Washington, D.C.

ZE'EV CHAFETS writes:

I am pleased that Jim Hoagland does not take issue with my basic argument—that reporters in Beirut have been harassed by Arab terrorists; that this harassment has sometimes led to self-censorship and distorted press coverage; and that some American news organizations, including the Washington *Post*, have tried to hide these facts from the public.

As to the points he does raise:

1. Mr. Hoagland, with his customary indifference to facts, claims that I relied on his article of March 4, 1982 for my information about Jonathan Randal's run-in with the Lebanese Communists and Edward Cody's scoop on Hama —and then suspiciously failed to mention his contribution.

Actually, both items appeared in the Washington *Post* years before Hoagland's article (on October 27, 1975 and June 25, 1981, respectively). Thus the praise he accords himself for being selected by me as a credible source ("... Mr. Chafets pays my article a compli-

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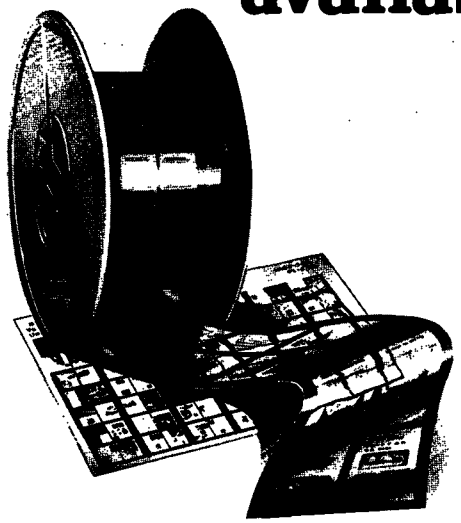

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ment by relying on it . . .") is undeserved.

2. Obviously, I could not have quoted Mr. Hoagland's 900-word article in its entirety. Citing relevant parts of it in no way distorts his meaning.

3. Mr. Hoagland's defense of his reporting from Beirut in the early 70's is irrelevant. My article discusses the period a decade later, when Mr. Hoagland presided as foreign editor over the distorted and often dishonest Middle East coverage of the Washington *Post*.

As for Edward Cody's letter, I would have liked to respond point by point, but there don't seem to be any substantive points—only some highly emotional invective directed against me. His only specific disagreements involve a quibble over the date of Syrian influence in Beirut; a curious objection that Beirut circa 1975-82 was not an "urban nightmare" (tens of thousands of civilians were murdered during that period); and an effort to characterize as simple unreported barroom conversation the press corps's failure to tell the truth about Arab terror against journalists.

In his letter, Mr. Cody calls me a "paid flack"—in contrast, I suppose, to his volunteer efforts on behalf of the PLO. Clearly, despite my "charm" and "efficiency," Mr. Cody disapproves of me. This should not be mistaken for general misanthropy, however; he has his heroes as well as his villains. On July 7, 1982, for example, he wrote movingly about his admiration for a PLO official, a man who played a leading role in planning the mass murder of Israeli civilians on Tel Aviv's coastal road in March 1978. Under the circumstances, I'm glad I'm not Mr. Cody's type.

Edward Cody admonishes your readers to "skip" my book, and I'm sure he hopes they will. Considering what the book reveals about journalistic practice, he has good reason, too.

Cotton Mather

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

In her review of Kenneth Silverman's *The Life and Times of Cotton Mather* [Books in Review, August], Fernanda Eberstadt writes that Mather "prayed to God that he might not only be apprised in advance of the conversion of the Jews but might live to convert and baptize a Jew himself." Neither Miss Eberstadt nor Silverman seems to know that later in life Mather changed his mind. As Mel Scult reports in his *Millennial Expectations and Jewish Liberties* (1978), Mather in his unpublished *Triparadisus*, written near the end of his life, declared that only those "that worship Christ" are the "true Israel of God" while "the circumcised infidels [i.e., the Jews] are no better than so many dogs." Mather now believed that Jews would never be converted, for they had been superseded by the Gentiles, the new Israel. "Alas I was a very young man; I understood not the true Israel," he wrote, explaining his earlier views, "and now I make my most public retraction."

None of this, of course, challenges Miss Eberstadt's broader interpretation of Mather. As she rightly understands, he was "no liberal and no ecumenicist."

JONATHAN D. SARNA
Hebrew Union College-Jewish
Institute of Religion
Cincinnati, Ohio

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Fernanda Eberstadt's otherwise excellent review contains a factual error which ought to be corrected. Specifically, Miss Eberstadt states that "in 1686 [Charles II] finally revoked the Massachusetts charter." While the revocation may have been effective in 1686, Charles II assuredly did not issue it in that year, having died on February 15, 1685. . . .

HARRIS M. ABRAMS
Columbus, Ohio

FERNANDA EBERSTADT writes:

I am grateful to Jonathan D. Sarna for his information. Harris M. Abrams, of course, is right: Charles II died in 1685. But there is nevertheless some confusion over when the charter's revocation actually came into effect. Although the High Court of Chancery's decree of dissolution was handed down in October 1684, it was not served upon the colony until May 1686, along with a commission for a provisional government. In the intervening year and a half, Governor Simon Bradstreet ruled as if nothing had happened. The delay can be attributed to Charles's death, to Monmouth's rebellion (which Charles's chosen governor of Massachusetts, a colonel returned from Tangier, helped put down), and to Whitehall's stalling over proposals from the Lords of Trade that additional territories be annexed.

"Science"

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

The process of politicization of supposedly scientific journals, noted by Jeffrey Marsh in his article "Politicizing Science" [May], and illuminated further by several letters in the September issue, can be traced back, in the case of *Science*, to at least as long ago as 1978. In an article in that journal's issue of August 11, 1978, entitled "Human Issues in Human Rights," Robert W. Kates, a member of the National Academy of Science's Committee on Human Rights, quoted remarks made by Iranian, Argentinian, and Soviet critics of the conventional Western view of human rights. . . . These remarks all sounded the standard note, "Yes, but what about economic welfare, full employment, education?" that is so regularly heard from those trying to distract attention from torture chambers and forced-labor camps. . . . Kates was not content simply to report these charges; he actively endorsed them, taking the occasion not only to deplore the 6-7 percent unemployment rate in the U.S., but to contrast it unfavorably with the "remarkable employment record" of the Soviets.

I wrote to *Science* to protest this gratuitous political statement by Kates, with its "progressive" tendency to equate our real or imagined sins of omission to (for example) the Soviet Union's very real sins of commission, but neither my letter nor any other letter of protest was published; the editors of *Science* forwarded my letter to Kates, but he did not respond, either.

The most disturbing aspect of this incident is the evidence it affords that in much of the scientific community, Left-progressive views, long standard in the literary world and academia, are now no longer felt to be political opinions, subject to controversy, and different in kind from scientific results; they are apparently seen as the merest common sense on which all parties should be happy to agree. Curiously, the letters columns of *Science* are full of sharp and prolonged controversy on matters scientific; it is apparently only leftish political views that are thought so well established as to be beyond controversy.

MARK HALPERN
Oakland, California

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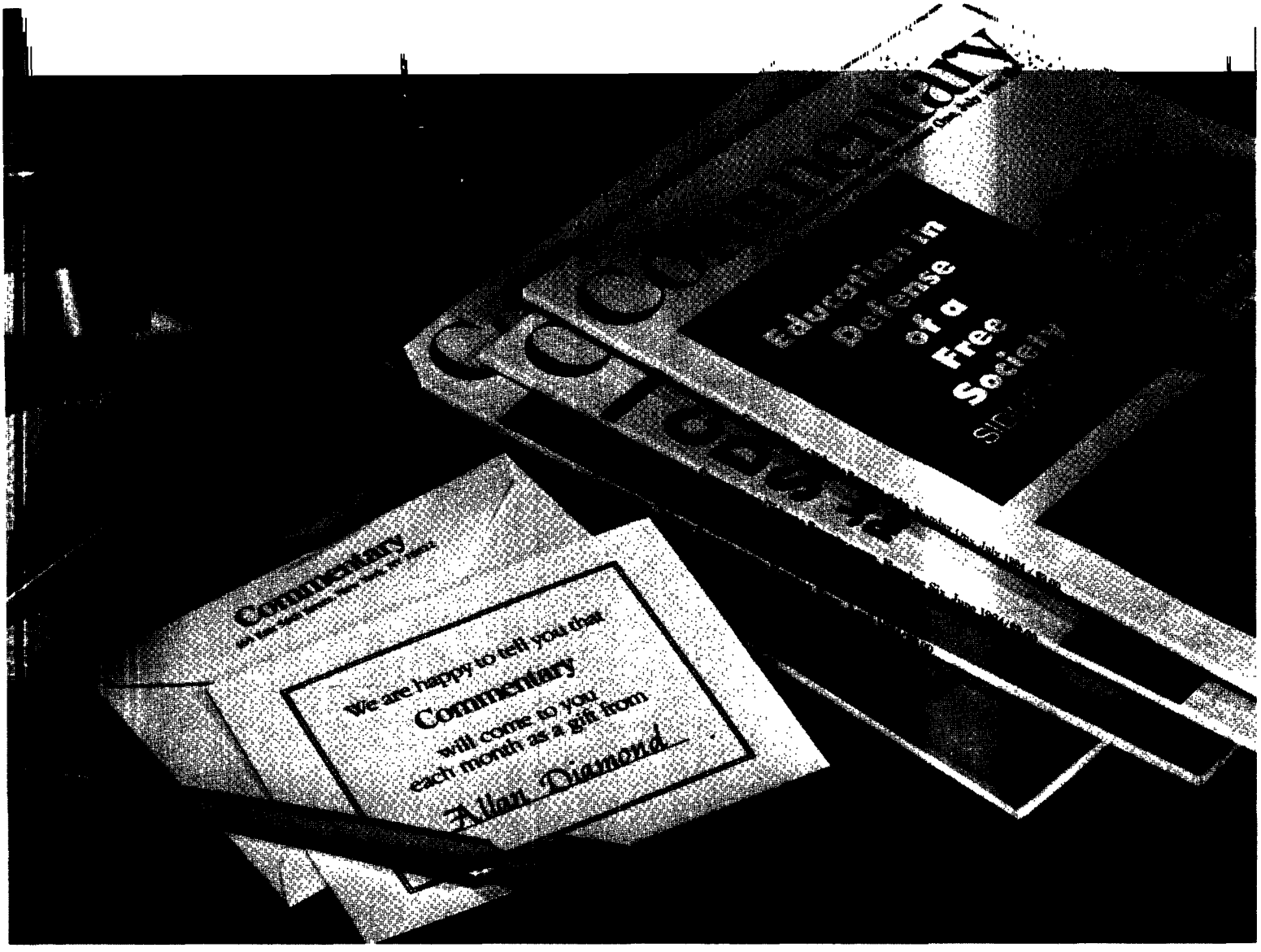

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The War Against "Star Wars"

Robert Jastrow

PRESIDENT REAGAN offered a new strategic vision to the American people in his "Star Wars" speech of March 23, 1983. The policy he had inherited from his predecessors relied on the threat of incinerating millions of Soviet civilians as the main deterrent to a Soviet nuclear attack on our country. The President was troubled by the moral dimensions of this policy. He said: "The human spirit must be capable of rising above dealing with other nations and human beings by threatening their existence." And he called on our scientists to find a way of defending the United States against a Soviet nuclear attack by intercepting the Soviet missiles before they reached our soil.

When I first heard the President's speech, I thought he had a great idea. I wrote an article commenting favorably on the proposal[1] and then, a little later, I traveled to Washington to hear a talk by Dr. George Keyworth, the President's Science Adviser, on the strategic and technical implications of the President's plan.

Since Dr. Keyworth was rumored to have made a major contribution to the thinking behind the "Star Wars" speech, I felt that I would be getting an insider's view of the technical prospects for success in this difficult undertaking. That was particularly interesting to me, because several of my fellow physicists had expressed the gravest reservations about the technical feasibility of the proposal. In fact, Dr. Hans Bethe, a distinguished Nobel laureate in physics, had said bluntly, "I *don't think it can be done.*"

Dr. Keyworth started by describing the circumstances that had led to the President's speech. Then he got into the technical areas I had come to hear about. "For more than five months," he told us, "some fifty of our nation's better technical minds [have] devoted their efforts almost exclusively to one problem—the defense against ballistic missiles." This group of specialists, which included some of the most qualified defense scientists in the country, had concluded that the President's goal was realistic—that it "probably could be done."

"The basis for their optimism," Dr. Keyworth went on, "is our tremendously broad technical progress over the past decade." He pointed specifically to the advances in computers and "new laser techniques." He also mentioned the promising new developments that might enable us to protect the vitally important satellites carrying all this laser weaponry and computing equipment, and prevent the Soviets from knocking these critical satellites out as a preliminary to a nuclear attack on the United States. "These and other recent technical advances," Dr. Keyworth concluded, "offer the possibility of a workable strategic [missile] defense system."

That was pretty clear language. Defense experts had given the President's proposal a green light on its technical merits. I went back to New York with a feeling that the President's vision of the future—a future in which nuclear weapons would be "impotent and obsolete"—was going to become a reality.

The following month a panel of university scientists came out with a report that flatly contradicted Dr. Keyworth's assessment. According to the panel, an effective defense of the United States against Soviet missiles was "unattainable." The report, prepared under the sponsorship of the Union of Concerned Scientists (UCS),[2] leveled numerous criticisms at the "Star Wars" proposal. It pointed out, *inter alia*, that thousands of satellites would be needed to provide a defensive screen; that one of the "Star Wars" devices under consideration would require placing in orbit a satellite weighing 40,000 tons; that the power needed for the lasers and other devices proposed would equal as much as 60 percent of the total power output of the United States; and that, in any case, the Soviets would be able to foil our defenses with

ROBERT JASTROW was the founder of the Goddard Institute for Space Studies, which conducts research for NASA in New York City. He received his Ph.D. in theoretical physics from Columbia University and worked in nuclear physics before joining NASA. Dr. Jastrow served as first chairman of NASA's Lunar Exploration Committee and received the Flemming Award for outstanding service in the federal government. He is currently professor of earth sciences at Dartmouth. The most recent of his books is *Astronomy: Fundamentals and Frontiers.*

[1] COMMENTARY, January 1984.

[2] *A Space-Based Missile Defense*, March 1984; *The Fallacy of Star Wars*, based on studies conducted by the Union of Concerned Scientists, edited by John Tirman, Vintage, 293 pp., $4.95.

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a large bag of relatively inexpensive tricks, such as spinning the missile to prevent the laser from burning a hole in it, or putting a shine on it to reflect the laser light.

The signers of the report included physicists of world renown and great distinction. The impact of their criticisms seemed absolutely devastating.

Around the same time, another study of the feasibility of the "Star Wars" defense came out with more or less the same conclusion. According to that report, which had been prepared for the Office of Technology Assessment (OTA)[3] of the Congress, the chance of protecting the American people from a Soviet missile attack is "so remote that it should not serve as the basis for public expectations or national policy."

These scientific studies, documented with charts and tables, apparently sounded the death knell of missile defense. Scientists had judged the President's proposal, and found it wanting. According to *Nature*, the most prestigious science journal in the world:

> The scientific community knows that [the President's proposal] will not work. The President's advisers, including his science adviser, Dr. George Keyworth, know it too, but are afraid to say so.
>
> Dr. Keyworth is employed to keep the President informed on these technical matters, but sadly, there is no evidence that he is willing to give Mr. Reagan the bad news.

A few weeks later, I received unclassified summaries of the blue-ribbon panels appointed by the Defense Department to look into the feasibility of a United States defense against Soviet missiles.[4] These were the documents on which Dr. Keyworth had relied in part for his optimistic appraisal. The reports by the government-appointed consultants were as different from the reports by the university scientists as day is from night. One group of distinguished experts said no fundamental obstacles stood in the way of success; the other group, equally distinguished, said it would not work. Who was right? According to the UCS report, "any inquisitive citizen" could understand the technical issues. I decided to look into the matter. This is what I found.

MISSILES usually consist of two or three separate rockets or "stages," also called boosters. On top of the uppermost stage sits the "bus" carrying the warheads. One by one, the stages ignite, burn out, and fall away. After the last stage has burned out and departed, the bus continues upward and onward through space. At this point it begins to release its separate warheads. Each warhead is pushed off the bus in a different direction with a different velocity, so as to reach a different target. The missiles with this capability are said to be MIRVed (MIRV stands for multiple independently targetable reentry vehicle).

Most of the discussion of the "Star Wars" defense assumes a many-layered defense with three or four distinct layers. The idea behind having several layers is that the total defense can be made nearly perfect in this way, even if the individual layers are less than perfect. For example, if each layer has, say, an 80-percent effectiveness—which means that one in five missiles or warheads will get through—a combination of three such layers will have an overall effectiveness better than 99 percent, which means that no more than one warhead in 100 will reach its target.[5]

The first layer, called the boost-phase defense, goes into effect as the Soviet missile rises above the atmosphere at the beginning of its trajectory. In the second layer, or mid-course defense, the booster has burned out and fallen away, and we concentrate on trying to destroy or disable the "bus" carrying the nuclear warheads, or the individual warheads themselves, as they arc up and over through space on their way to the United States. In the third layer, or terminal defense, we try to intercept each warhead in the final stages of its flight.

The boost-phase defense offers the greatest payoff to the defender because at this stage the missile has not yet sent any of its warheads on their separate paths. Since the largest Soviet missiles carry ten warheads each, if our defense can destroy one of these missiles at the beginning of its flight, it will eliminate ten warheads at a time. The defense catches the Soviet missiles when they have all their eggs in one basket, so to speak.

But the boost-phase defense is also the most difficult technically, and has drawn the most fire from critics. How can we destroy a Soviet missile thousands of miles away, within seconds or minutes after it has left its silo?

At the present time, one of the most promising technologies for doing that is the laser, which shoots a bolt of light at the missile as it rises. Missiles move fast, but light moves faster. A laser beam travels a thousand miles in less than a hundredth of a second. Focused in a bright spot on the missile's skin, the laser beam either burns a hole through the thin metal of the skin, which is only about a tenth of an inch thick, or it softens the metal sufficiently so that it ruptures and the missile disintegrates.

Another very promising technology for the boost-phase defense is the Neutral Particle Beam,

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[3] *Directed Energy Missile Defense in Space*: A Background Paper, April 1984.

[4] *Ballistic Missile Defense and U.S. National Security*: A Summary Report, Prepared for the Future Security Strategy Study, October 1983; *The Strategic Defense Initiative*: Statement by Dr. James C. Fletcher Before the House Committee on Armed Services, March 1984.

[5] The explanation is that 20 percent get through the first layer; 20 percent of that fraction, or a net of 4 percent, get through the second layer; finally, 20 percent of that 4 percent, or 0.8 percent, get through the third layer. The overall effectiveness of the three layers is 99.2 percent.

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which shoots a stream of fast-moving hydrogen atoms at the missile. The atoms travel at a speed of about 60,000 miles a second, which is less than the speed of light but still fast enough to catch up to the missile in a fraction of a second. The beam of fast-moving atoms is very penetrating, and goes through the metal skin of the missile and into the electronic brain that guides it on its course. There the atoms create spurious pulses of electricity that can cause the brain to hallucinate, driving the missile off its course so that it begins to tumble and destroys itself. If the beam is intense enough, it can flip the bits inside the brain's memory so that it remembers the wrong things; or it can cause the brain to lose its memory altogether. Any one of these effects will be deadly to the Soviet missile's execution of its task.

The Neutral Particle Beam can also play havoc with the circuits in the electronic brain that guide the bus sitting on top of the missile. The mischief created here may prevent the bus from releasing its warheads; or it may cause the bus to send the warheads in the wrong directions, so that they miss their targets; or it may damage the electronic circuits in the warheads themselves, after they have been pushed off the bus, so that when they reach their targets they fail to explode.[6] The Neutral Particle Beam can be lethal to the attacker in the boost phase, the mid-course phase, and the terminal phase. All in all, it is a most useful device.

Now for an important point: to be effective, the laser or the Neutral Particle Beam must have unobstructed views of all the Soviet missile fields. One of the best ways of achieving that is to put the device that produces these beams on a satellite and send it into orbit.

So this, then, is the essence of the plan for a boost-phase defense against Soviet missiles: a fleet of satellites, containing equipment that generates laser beams or Neutral Particle Beams, circles the earth, with enough satellites in the fleet so that several satellites are over the Soviet missile fields at all times—a sufficient number to shoot down, in the worst case, all 1,400 Soviet missiles if they are launched against us simultaneously.

THE plan looks good on paper. Yet according to the UCS report, it has absolutely no practical value. This study shows that because of the realities of satellite orbits, the satellites needed to protect the United States against Soviet attack would "number in the thousands." The report's detailed calculations put the precise number at 2,400 satellites.

Now, everyone acknowledges that these satellites are going to be extremely expensive. Each one will cost a billion dollars or more—as much as an aircraft carrier. Satellites are the big-ticket items in the plan for a space-based defense. If thousands are needed, the cost of implementing the plan will be many trillions of dollars. A defense with a price tag like that is indeed a "turkey," as a spokesman for the UCS called it.

If the numbers put out by the UCS were right, there would be no point in looking into the plan further. But after the UCS report hit the papers, I began to hear rumors from professionals in the field that the numbers were not right. Since the whole "Star Wars" plan rested on this one point, I thought I would just check out the calculations myself. So I got hold of a polar-projection map of the northern hemisphere and a piece of celluloid. I marked the positions of the North Pole and the Soviet missile fields on the celluloid, stuck a pin through the North Pole, and rotated the celluloid around the Pole to imitate the rotation of the earth carrying the missile fields with it. Then I played with the map, the moving celluloid, and different kinds of satellite orbits for a day or two, to get a feel for the problem.

It was soon clear that about 50 evenly spaced satellite orbits, with four satellites in each orbit, would guarantee adequate coverage of the missile fields. In other words, 200 satellites would do the job, and "thousands" were certainly not needed. I could also see that it might be possible to get down to fewer than 100 satellites, but I could not prove that with my celluloid "computer."

I talked again with my friends in the defense community and they told me that my answers were in the right ballpark. The experts had been looking at this problem for more than ten years, and the accurate results were well known. As I had suspected, a hundred or so satellites were adequate. According to careful computer studies done at the Livermore laboratory, 90 satellites could suffice, and if the satellites were put into low-altitude orbits, we might get by with as few as 45 satellites.[7]

So the bottom line is that 90 satellites—and perhaps somewhat fewer—are needed to counter a Soviet attack. That cuts the cost down from many trillions of dollars to a level that could be absorbed into the amount already earmarked by the government for spending on our strategic forces during the next ten or fifteen years. It removes the aura of costliness and impracticality which had been cast over the President's proposal by the Union of Concerned Scientists' report.

The scientists who did these calculations for the UCS had exaggerated the number of satellites by a factor of about twenty-five. How did they make a mistake like that? A modicum of thought should have indicated that "thousands" of satel-

[6] Nuclear explosives, unlike ordinary explosives, do not detonate if you drop them or hit them with a hammer. A series of precisely timed steps, controlled by electronic circuits in the warhead, has to occur before the explosion can happen. If the circuits are damaged, and the steps do not occur, or their timing is off, the warhead will not explode.

[7] These numbers depend on the power of the laser beams and the sizes of the mirror used to focus them. All the studies described here make the same assumptions—a 20- or 25-million-watt laser and a 30-foot mirror.

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lites could not be the right answer. Apparently the members of the panel did begin to think more carefully about the matter later on—but only after they had issued their report—because in testimony before a congressional committee a UCS spokesman lowered his organization's estimate from 2,400 satellites to 800 satellites.[8] In their most recent publication on the matter, the members of the panel lowered their estimate again, to 300 satellites.[9] That was getting closer. Another factor of three down and they would be home.

But the Union of Concerned Scientists never said to the press or the Congress: "We have found important mistakes in our calculations, and when these mistakes are corrected the impact is to cut the cost of the missile defense drastically. In fact, correcting these errors of ours has the effect of making the President's idea much more practical than we thought it was when we issued our report." Months after the publication of the report, *Science 84*, published by the American Association for the Advancement of Science, was still referring to the need for "2,400 orbiting laser stations."

THE work by the Union of Concerned Scientists on the question of the satellite fleet is the poorest that has appeared in print, to my knowledge. The report prepared for the Office of Technology Assessment, which does a better job on this particular question, says that 160 satellites are needed for our defense. That is only about double the accurate result that came out of the computer studies at Livermore.

But the report to the OTA has a different failing. Because of an error in reasoning—an extremely inefficient placement of the satellites in their orbits—it concludes that if the Soviets were to build more missiles in an effort to overwhelm our defense, the United States would have to increase the number of its satellites in orbit in direct proportion to the increase in the number of Soviet missiles.[10]

This seems like a technical detail, but it has a cosmic impact. It means that if the Soviets build twice as many missiles, we have to build twice as many satellites. If they build four times as many missiles, we have to build four times as many satellites. Since our satellites are going to be expensive, that can be a costly trade-off. In fact, it could enable the Soviets to overwhelm our defense simply by building more missiles. As the *New Republic* said: "They could just roll out more SS-18's" (the SS-18 is the biggest and most powerful missile in the Soviet arsenal).

But some fine work by the theoretical physicists at Los Alamos has shown that the report to the OTA is seriously in error. The Los Alamos calculations, which have been confirmed by computations at Livermore, show that the number of satellites needed to counter a Soviet attack does *not* go up in direct proportion to the number of Soviet missiles. It turns out instead that the number of satellites goes up approximately in proportion to the *square root* of the number of missiles.

That also seems like a fine point—almost a quibble—but consider its significance. The square root means that if the Soviets build *four* times as many missiles, we only have to build *twice* as many satellites to match them. Suppose the United States built a defensive screen of 100 satellites that could shoot down—as a very conservative estimate—80 percent, or four-fifths, of the Soviet missiles. And suppose the Soviets decided they wanted to build enough missiles so that the number of missiles getting through our defensive screen would be the same as the number that would have reached the United States if we had no defense. That is what "overwhelming the defense" means. To do that, the Soviets would have to build more than 5,000 additional missiles and silos.[11] The Los Alamos "square-root" rule tells us that if the Soviets went to that trouble and expense, the United States could counter those thousands of new missiles with only 100 additional satellites.

With numbers like that, the cost trade-offs are bound to favor the defense over the offense. If the Soviets tried to overwhelm our defense, they would be bankrupted before we were.

The report to the OTA has other defects. One is a peculiar passage in which the author exaggerates by a factor of roughly 50 the requirements for a terminal defense, i.e., a defense that tries to destroy the Soviet warheads toward the end of their passage, when they are already over the United States. Current planning assumes that as the warheads descend, they will be intercepted by smart mini-missiles with computer brains and radar or infrared "eyes," which maneuver into the path of the warhead and destroy it on impact. A smart missile of this kind destroyed an oncoming enemy warhead at an altitude of 100 miles on

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[8] The scientist explained that his panel had forgotten that Soviet missile fields are spread out across a 5,000-mile arc in the USSR, and had put all the missiles in one spot. This made it harder for the satellite lasers to reach all the missiles, and meant more satellites were needed.

[9] *The Fallacy of Star Wars*, Chapter 5. The explanation offered by the UCS for this correction is that its experts belatedly realized some satellites are closer to their missile quarry than others, and can polish the missile off in a shorter time. That means each satellite can kill more missiles, and, therefore, fewer satellites are needed to do the whole job.

[10] The report assumed the American satellites would move through space in tight bunches, instead of being spread out around their orbits. By bunching them together this way, it kept the satellites from being used effectively, and overestimated the number of satellites we would have to put up to counter an increased Soviet deployment of missiles. The theorists at Livermore and Los Alamos assumed the satellites were spread out evenly in their orbits when they did their calculations. I did also, when I took a look at the problem. Anyone trying to figure out how to build the best defense for the United States at the lowest cost to the taxpayer would do the same.

[11] The Soviets have 1,400 missile silos and missiles. To get five times this number and make up for the losses suffered in penetrating our defense, they would have to build another 5,600 missiles and silos.

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June 10, 1984, in a successful test of the technology by the Army.

The question is: how many smart missiles are required? Professionals sizing up the problem have concluded that at most 5,000 intercepting missiles will be needed. The answer according to the report to the OTA: 280,000 smart missiles. Though these smart missiles will not cost as much as aircraft carriers, they are not exactly throwaways. Thus the effect of this calculation, as with the studies by the Union of Concerned Scientists on the size of our fleet of laser-equipped satellites, is to create the impression that a defense against Soviet missiles will be so costly as to be impractical.

How did the report to the Office of Technology Assessment arrive at 280,000 missiles? First, the report assumed that about 1,000 sites in the United States—missile silos, command posts, and so on—need to be defended. That is reasonable.

Second, the report assumed the Soviets might choose to concentrate their whole attack on any one of these 1,000 sites. This means that every single site would have to have enough intercepting missiles to counter the Soviet attack, if the entire attack were aimed at this one location.

That is not reasonable. Why would the Soviets launch thousands of warheads—their entire nuclear arsenal—against one American missile silo? This is known in the trade as a GIGO calculation (garbage in, garbage out). The theorist makes an absurd assumption, does some impeccable mathematics, and arrives at an absurd answer.

WHEN theoretical physicists joust over ideas, a factor of two hardly counts; a factor of three matters a bit; factors of ten begin to be important; factors of 100 can win or lose an argument; and factors of 1,000 begin to be embarrassing. In a study of the practicality of the Neutral Particle Beam—that most promising destroyer of Soviet missiles and warheads—the panel of the Union of Concerned Scientists made a mistake by a cool factor of 1,600. As in the case of the panel's estimate of the size of our satellite fleet, the direction of its error was such as to make this promising "Star Wars" technology seem hopelessly impractical.

According to the scientists who wrote the UCS report, the device—called a linear accelerator—needed to generate the Neutral Particle Beam would weigh 40,000 tons. To be effective, this enormous weight would have to be placed in a satellite. Of course, the idea of loading 40,000 tons onto an orbiting satellite is absurd. By comparison, the NASA space station will weigh about 40 tons. This finding by the Union of Concerned Scientists makes it clear that the plan to use the Neutral Particle Beam is ridiculous.

But the UCS's study panel made a mistake. The correct result for the weight of the linear accelerator is 25 tons, and not 40,000 tons. Now, 25 tons is quite a practical weight to put into an orbiting satellite. It is, in fact, about the same as the payload carried in a single flight of the NASA shuttle.[12]

A UCS spokesman admitted his organization's rather large error in congressional testimony some months ago.[13] But when he made the admission he did not say: "We have made a mistake by a factor of more than a thousand, and the correct weight of the accelerator for this Neutral Particle Beam is not 40,000 tons, but closer to 25 tons." He said: "We proposed to increase the area of the beam and accelerator, noting that would make the accelerator unacceptably massive for orbital deployment. Our colleagues have pointed out that the area could be increased after the beam leaves the small accelerator."

That was all he said about the mistake in his testimony.

Now, this cryptic remark does not convey to a Senator attending the hearing that the scientist has just confessed to a mistake which changes a 40,000-ton satellite into a 25-ton satellite. There is nothing in his remark to indicate that the UCS's distinguished panel of scientists had reached a false conclusion on one of the best "Star Wars" defenses because the panel had made a whopping error in its calculations.

The report prepared for the OTA also makes a mistake on the Neutral Particle Beam, but this mistake is only by a factor of fifteen. According to the report, the Soviet Union can protect its missiles and warheads from the Neutral Particle Beam with a lead shield about one-tenth of an inch thick. The shield, the report states, would not weigh too much and therefore could be "an attractive countermeasure" for the Soviets.

But scientists at Los Alamos have pointed out that a layer of lead one-tenth of an inch thick will not stop the fast-moving atoms of the Neutral Particle Beam; they will go right through it. In fact, a table printed in the OTA report itself shows that the lead shield must be 15 times thicker—at least 1½ inches thick—to stop these fast-moving particles.

A layer of lead as thick as that, wrapped around the electronics in the missile and its warheads, would weigh many tons—considerably more than the total weight of all the warheads on the missile. If the Soviets were unwise enough to follow the advice offered them in the report to the Office of Technology Assessment, their missile would be so loaded down with lead that it would be unable to get off the ground.

That would be a great plus for American security, and a nice response from our defense scientists to the President's call for ways of making the Soviet missiles "impotent and obsolete."

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12 The shuttle's payload is 33 tons in the orbits currently in use. It would be about 20 tons in the orbits needed for the defensive screen against Soviet missiles.

13 Hearings Before the Senate Committee on Armed Services, April 24, 1984.

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OTHER suggestions for the Soviets can be found in the report by the Union of Concerned Scientists. They include shining up the Soviet missiles, spinning them, attaching "band-aids" and "window shades," as the UCS report calls them, and launching "balloons" as fake warheads. I am not an expert in this dark area of "countermeasures," but I have talked with the experts enough to understand why the professionals in the defense community regard many of these proposals as bordering on inanity.

Putting a shine on the missile sounds like a good idea, because it reflects a part of the laser beam and weakens the beam's effect. However, it would be a poor idea for the Soviets in practice. One reason is that the Soviets could not count on keeping their missiles shiny; during the launch the missile gets dirty, partly because of its own exhaust gases, and its luster is quickly dulled. But the main reason is that no shine is perfect; some laser energy is bound to get through, and will heat the surface. The heating tends to dull the shine, so more heat gets through, and dulls the shine some more, and still more heat gets through . . . and very soon the shine is gone.

Spinning the missile spreads the energy of the laser beam over its whole circumference, and is a better idea than putting a shine on it. However, it only gains the Soviets a factor of pi, or roughly three, at most. And it does not gain them anything at all if the laser energy is transmitted in sharp pulses that catch the missile in one point of its spin, so to speak. The experts say there is no problem in building a laser that sends out its energy in sharp pulses.

Now to the other proposals by the scientists on the UCS panel. The "band-aid" is a metal skirt which slides up and down the outside of the missile, automatically picking out the spot that is receiving the full heat of the laser beam, and protecting the metal skin underneath. The "window shade" is a flexible, metallized sheet which is rolled up and fastened to the outside of the missile when it is launched, and then unrolled at altitudes above fifty miles. It is supposed to protect the missile against the X-ray laser, which is another exotic but promising defense technology.

The trouble with these suggestions is that they do not fit the realities of missile construction very well. A missile is a very fragile object, the ratio of its weight empty to its weight loaded being 10 or 15 to 1—nearly the same as an eggshell. Any attempt to fasten band-aids and window shades on the outside of the missile, even if their contours are smoothed to minimize drag, would put stresses on the flimsy structure that would require a major renovation of the rocket and a new series of test flights. If the Soviets tried to carry out all the suggestions made by the UCS's scientists—putting on band-aids and window shades, spinning their missiles and shining them up—their missile program would be tied up in knots. That would be another fine response from our scientists to the President's call for a way of rendering the Soviet weapons useless.

The "balloon" is still another trick to foil our defenses. The thought here is that after the boost phase is over, and the booster rocket has fallen away, the bus that normally pushes out the Soviet warheads will instead kick out a large number of "balloons"—light, metallized hollow spheres. Some balloons will have warheads inside them, and some will not. Since the empty balloons weigh very little, the Soviets can put out a great many of these. Not knowing which among this great multitude of balloons contain warheads, we will waste our mid-course defenses on killing every balloon in sight, empty or not.

A friend who works on these matters all the time explained to me what was wrong with this idea. He said that a modest amount of thought reveals that it is possible to tell very easily which balloons have warheads, and which do not. All the defense has to do is tap one, in effect, by directing a sharp pulse of laser light at it, and then observing how it recoils. An empty balloon will recoil more rapidly than a loaded one. Once the loaded balloons—the ones with the warheads—are picked out, we can go after them with our Neutral Particle Beams, or other warhead-killers.

This list of proposed countermeasures is not complete, but it is representative. The ideas put forward by the UCS—the band-aid, the window shade, the shining and spinning rockets, and the balloon—remind one of nothing so much as a group of bright students from the Bronx High School of Science getting together to play a game in which they pretend to be Soviet scientists figuring out how to defeat American missile defenses. The ideas they come up with are pretty good for a group of high-school students, but not good enough to stand up to more than a thirty-minute scrutiny by the defense professionals who earn their living in thinking about these matters.

Of course, there is no harm in these proposals. The harm comes in offering shoddy work—superficial analyses, marred by errors of fact, reasoning, and simple carelessness—as a sound scientific study bearing on a decision of vital importance to the American people. The work seems sound enough on casual examination, with its numbers, graphs, and theoretical arguments. Certainly the New York *Times* was impressed when it described the UCS report as "exhaustive and highly technical." It is only when you penetrate more deeply, and begin to talk with knowledgeable people who have thought long and hard about these problems, that you realize something is wrong here.

HOW did published work by competent scientists come to have so many major errors? A theorist reviewing these reports on the feasibility of the President's proposal cannot help noticing that all the errors and rough spots

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in the calculations seem to push the results in one direction—toward a bigger and more costly defense, and a negative verdict on the soundness of a "Star Wars" defense against Soviet missiles. If the calculations had been done without bias, conscious or otherwise, you would expect some errors to push the result one way, and other errors to push it the other way.

But all the errors and omissions go in one direction only—toward making the President's plan seem impractical, costly, and ineffective.

This is not to say that the errors were made in a deliberate, conscious effort to deceive. I do not think that for a moment. What happens is quite different, and every theorist will recognize the phenomenon. When you finish a calculation, you check your result against your intuitive feeling as to what the situation should be. You ask yourself: "Does this result make sense, or not?" If the result does not make sense, you know either that you have made a great discovery which will propel you to Stockholm, or you have made a mistake. Usually you assume the latter, and you proceed to check your calculations very carefully. But if the result seems to be in good agreement with everything you expected about the behavior of the system you are investigating, you say to yourself, "Well, that looks all right," and you go on to the next step.

Of course, a careful theorist always checks his calculations anyway, whether the answer seems sensible or not. But he is apt to check them just a mite less carefully if the results agree with what he expected than if they do not.

I think this is what must have happened to the theorists who wrote the report for the Union of Concerned Scientists. Clearly they had a strong bias against the President's proposal from the beginning, because they believed that a defense against Soviet missiles would, in their own words, "have a profoundly destabilizing effect on the nuclear balance, increasing the risk of nuclear war," and that such a defense against missiles "could well produce higher numbers of fatalities" than no defense at all.

So, when the calculations by the panel yielded the result that thousands of laser-equipped satellites would be needed to counter a Soviet attack—which meant that for this reason alone the whole plan was hopelessly impractical—the members of the panel were not surprised. Their technical studies had simply confirmed what they already knew to be true for other reasons, namely, that the President's idea was terrible.

Now, I would like to wager that if the theorists studying the matter for the UCS had found that only 10 satellites could protect the United States from a massive Soviet attack—if they had gotten a result that indicated the President's proposal was simple, effective, and inexpensive to carry out—then they would have scrutinized their calculations very, very carefully.

WHAT is one to make of all this?

When I was a graduate student in theoretical physics, we revered some of the men who have lent their names to the report by the Union of Concerned Scientists. They are among the giants of 20th-century physics—the golden era in our profession. Yet these scientists have given their endorsement to badly flawed calculations that create a misleading impression in the minds of Congress and the public on the technical feasibility of a proposal aimed at protecting the United States from destruction.

Lowell Wood, a theorist at Livermore and one of the most brilliant of the younger generation of defense scientists, made a comment recently to the New York *Times* about what he also saw as a contradiction between the research talents of Dr. Hans Bethe—the most prominent physicist associated with the Union of Concerned Scientists—and the negative views of that great theorist on the technical merits of the proposal to defend the United States against Soviet missiles. Dr. Wood said:

> Is Hans Bethe a good physicist? Yes, he's one of the best alive. Is he a rocket engineer? No. Is he a military-systems engineer? No. Is he a general? No. Everybody around here respects Hans Bethe enormously as a physicist. But weapons are my profession. He dabbles as a military-systems analyst.

It seems to me that Dr. Wood has part of the answer. I think the remainder of the answer is that scientists belong to the human race. As with the rest of us, in matters on which they have strong feelings, their rational judgments can be clouded by their ideological preconceptions.

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Islam vs. Israel

Ronald L. Nettler

THE series of bombings and other acts of violence directed at American installations in Lebanon over the last months has focused public attention on the fanatic groups, acting in the name of fundamentalist Islam, that have proudly accepted responsibility for these terrible deeds. Most of these groups have been linked with the radical regime now in power in Iran. But the influence of Muslim fundamentalism is hardly limited to Iran or the areas into which Iran has been able to project its beliefs. Indeed, one of the most fertile grounds for ideological and political fundamentalism in recent years has been, paradoxically, that quintessentially "moderate" Arab country, Egypt. To an extent little realized, Muslim fundamentalists played and have continued to play a major part in setting the terms and defining the limits of Egyptian policy, not just in domestic matters but in foreign policy as well, and most especially in relations between Egypt and Israel.

In order to understand the nature of the present influence wielded by the fundamentalists within Egypt (and in the Arab-Islamic world generally), it is necessary to survey, however briefly, the recent history of their views toward Israel and the Jews.

I

THE general Islamic attitude toward Zionism and Israel was from the beginning totally antagonistic, rejecting absolutely the legitimacy of Jewish statehood in Palestine. The foundations of this harsh animosity lay in the Islamic conception of the Jews and of their proper place in history and society. It was held that the majority of Jews had long sought to undermine Islam; to curb their evil proclivity was one of the purposes of Muslim rule over the Jews. This conception naturally denied the possibility of Jewish self-rule or even of equality with Muslims.

With the rise of Zionism and the establishment of Israel, contemporary Muslim fundamentalists were instrumental in reformulating traditional doctrine on the subject of the Jews. Indeed, many of the fundamentalists, obsessed with their self-appointed tasks of purging Muslim countries of alien Western influences, and of helping to create regimes on the example of the earliest Muslim polity, saw an even deeper significance in the contemporary position of Jews and Israel. For them, the Jewish state represented a center of Jewish conspiratorial power, whose purpose it was to infiltrate the Muslim countries, striving first to destroy Islamic values and then to instill the germ of Westernization. Leading fundamentalist ideologues carried this idea to its extreme, claiming that the secular leadership of their own countries, and the ideas and institutions which this leadership imposed on its Muslim subjects, were part of the larger Jewish-Zionist conspiracy against Islam. This "explanation" enabled them to "understand" better the "sources" of Islam's contemporary crisis, and to locate these sources where they might be successfully confronted.

The line of reasoning was clear and simple: Islam was undergoing a crisis, characterized by subjugation to the West and the erosion of traditional ways. The main source of this crisis was the insidious Jewish presence, which weakened the Muslim polity by denigrating and devaluing Islamic principles. The Jews and Israel thus came to be seen as the impediment to Islamic renewal—just as they had been Islam's enemies in the days of Muhammad.

II

THE first and most important Sunni Muslim fundamentalist organization was the Muslim Brothers. Founded by Shaykh Hasan al-Banna in Ismailiyah in 1928, the Brothers gave practical expression to fundamentalist doctrine by forming a network of social and guild institutions. There they also laid a foundation of broad popular support. But notwithstanding periodic involvement in revolutionary politics, the Muslim Brothers were generally cautious politi-

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cally, preferring to wait for an opportune moment to effect their program.

The establishment of Israel in 1948 and the Arab military defeat in the war of independence provided the Muslim Brothers in Egypt with a focus for refining their basic doctrine concerning the need for internal cleansing and external struggle. The notion of Zionism as an evil force became their ideological center, Israel and the Jews their permanent enemy. This in turn helped to loosen the traditional Sunni strictures against overthrowing any Muslim ruler, no matter how objectionable his behavior, so long as he remained nominally Muslim. Once the "true," i.e., Jewish, nature of the Westernizing Muslim regimes was revealed, the sacred struggle could be turned inward. When the Ayatollah Khomeini, calling for war against the secular Ba'ath regime in Iraq, said that this would be a "war against the Zionist agent, Saddam Hussein," and the first step toward "the liberation of Jerualem," he was speaking out of just this conception of the Jews and of Israel.

It was also such thinking, given its most articulate early expression in the writing of Sayyid Qutb (1906-66), that was later to become the basis of the Muslim Brothers' renunciation of Camp David—and of the assassination of Anwar Sadat.

Qutb's thoughts on the subject of the Jews and Israel were summarized in his influential essay of the early 1950's, "Our Struggle With the Jews." Qutb portrayed the Jews here as the essential enemy of Islam, and the struggle against the Jews as Islam's main historical challenge. In Qutb's view, Jewish machinations against Islam possessed a prototypical quality; though Christianity and sometimes Communism also appeared as part of the anti-Islam front, the Jews (or Zionism) were in fact the wellspring of all the forces of darkness, whatever the latter's ostensible identity. Indeed, Qutb used the terms "the Jews" and "enemies of the Muslims" interchangeably.

Qutb saw a basic continuity between the classical relationship of Muslims and Jews and its modern manifestation in the Arab-Israeli conflict:

> The struggle between Islam and the Jews continues and is destined to continue in the future, because the Jews will be satisfied only with the destruction of this religion.... Today, the conflict has intensified since the Jews came from everywhere and announced that they had established the state of Israel. Their covetousness extended from afar to Jerusalem....

The Jews realized, said Qutb, as many Muslims did not, that the Muslim community bereft of true Islam would be no physical match for a determined Zionist campaign. Just as the Jews in the early period of Islam sought to undermine the Muslims' faith, so today did they seek the same goal, albeit in ways more suited to modern life:

> These forces appear today in the Islamic world as a large army of [Jewish] agents in the form of professors, philosophers, researchers—sometimes also writers, poets, scientists, and journalists—carrying Muslim names because they have a Muslim ancestry! And some of them are even from the ranks of the Muslim religious authorities! This "army of the learned" seeks to shake the faith of Muslims in all possible ways.... The agents of Zionism today are like this....

In later fundamentalist writings, Qutb's idea of a permanent adversarial relation between the descendants of Ishmael and Isaac was taken as axiomatic. It became the center of the doctrine legitimating indigenous political protest and even, in the appropriate circumstances, rebellion, to rid Muslim states of their crypto-Jewish secular rulers and intelligentsia. Already for Sayyid Qutb, Gamal Abdel Nasser was an agent of Zionism. But Nasser at least obscured his alliances with the Jews. His successor, Sadat, shamelessly proclaimed his.

III

In Sadat's visit to Jerusalem in 1977 and in the subsequent peace he concluded with Israel at Camp David, the Muslim Brothers found dramatic proof of the fundamentalist explanation of Islamic weakness and decadence. This "fallacious peace" vindicated the fundamentalist thesis of an alien ideological invasion; it proved that decades of Muslim backsliding had culminated in a near-total collapse. The leaders of the worldwide anti-Islamic forces, now stripped of all disguises, had brazenly entered a sovereign Muslim state for their final thrust.

The reaction of the Egyptian Muslim Brothers was expressed most forcefully in their monthly magazine, *al-Da'wah* ("The Call to Islam"). Here there was intense discussion concerning the diabolical nature of the Jews and Israel's intent to wreck Egypt and its Islamic foundations. Particularly important were the articles of Umar al-Tilmisani, spiritual leader of the Muslim Brothers in Egypt and chief editor of *al-Da'wah*.

The cornerstone of al-Tilmisani's "vision" was the notion that the Jews are by nature evil and therefore cannot live in peace with others:

> The whole world knows the nature of Jewish "morality": (1) Artifice. (2) Robbing. (3) Reneging on promises. (4) Opportunism. (5) Insincerity. (6) Fanatical racism. (7) A desire to destroy the world in order that they might rule it. (8) Striving for battle. (9) Egoism and selfishness. (10) Pillaging most of the world's resources. (11) Horrible cruelty in torturing their enemies. (12) [A tendency] to sacrifice the precious things which other people are proud of, in the pursuit of money....

Umar al-Tilmisani saw in "normalization of relations" the means which would enable the Jews of Israel to act according to the dictates of their nature—i.e., to destroy the values, customs, and material foundations of an Islamic Egypt. With the normalization of relations, he wrote,

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will come all manner of moral evils such as cabarets, drinking of liquor, and white slavery. . . .

The Jews will exploit all the writers who will sell their faith and honor for dirhams. These writers will hide behind Muslim names or "freedom of speech" . . . and this at a time when the Islamic message is impeded by many obstacles. . . .

The Jews institute ways of deceitful propaganda. What enables them to utilize this propaganda as they spread their poison among the youth is that they claim to be fighting backwardness which they allege [is due to Islam]; while they also in fact fight all varieties of Islamic tradition. . . .

In al-Tilmisani's view, the Egyptian economy would also fall victim, through general economic exploitation and, even worse, through the violation of the sacred Islamic prohibition on interest. The Israeli embassy in Egypt would be established as the internal "command center" of nefarious Zionist planning:

Normalization of relations with Israel is the most dangerous cancer eating away at all the life cells in our bodies. . . . As for exchange of ambassadors with Israel, this is the greatest catastrophe . . . and the opening of the gates of evil on Egypt. . . .

Have we really reached the point where we would protect those who want to destroy us? . . . What has befallen us? Where is our intellectual soundness? Where is our foresight?

This frightful extreme, according to al-Tilmisani, had been reached because of the weakness and collapse of the Muslim religious, cultural, and political leadership. Though Muslims had to recognize that Israel was the head of the snake of international anti-Islamic forces, no special blame was to be cast on Israel for doing what came naturally to it. Instead, "the greatest blame is to be laid on the rulers of the Islamic countries who know all this and do not condemn it, but rather encourage it. . . ."

In one of his most outspoken pieces, al-Tilmisani attacked these Muslim rulers, whom he called "lovers of Islam's enemies":

Consider to what extent there may be a connection betweent [our] real enemies and [our] rulers; the latter whom we would always have considered the strength of the Muslims—and once they were—but who [now] defend the Muslims' enemies. Our rulers have become as poisoned arrows in the very hearts of the Muslims. This is our situation today. . . .

Egypt made a peace treaty with Israel. We opposed it from the first day, because it was, and remains, an evil in every respect. And your shouts [O Rulers] were raised in anger and threat [against us]. We thought you might do something to save the Muslims from this hideous treaty. But all we saw were empty conferences. . . . And we heard nothing but excuses . . . and the rustling of billions of dollars moving from pockets to pockets; not in the service of beating back Israel, but rather in the service of those among you who oppress their Muslim subjects, to aid them in mistreating [Muslims] . . . O brave leaders!! . . . Your arm is raised only against Muslims who proclaim truth, and your strength falters only against your worst enemies . . . the Zionists. . . .

The Muslim rulers love their enemies—the enemies of their religion. This is something their subjects cannot accept. . . .

Al-Da'wah held out little hope that the present generation of Muslim rulers would do what was required. Yet a message of exhortation nevertheless filled its pages. In this "crisis of crises," only "the reformist Muslims"—i.e., fundamentalists—were capable of carrying the day. With broad strokes and in emotionally evocative hues, *al-Da'wah* set forth its vision of true Muslim leaders directing the masses back to their sources of life and vitality. The peace with Israel, signifying the ultimate degradation of Islam in the modern world, would be renounced. Guided by traditional principles, Muslims in Egypt would again live nobly and gloriously, an example to their oppressed brethren throughout the lands of Islam. In order to achieve this goal, Umar al-Tilmisani exhorted his people to die, if necessary:

When death is inevitable, it is impossible that you will die as cowards. Surely it is better that you should die under fire, honorably, than that you should live debased, subjected to the arrogance of those who despise us.

IV

Some months before his assassination, President Sadat halted the publication of *al-Da'wah*. The magazine's open enmity to his government and its pledge of continuous struggle against the peace were obviously symptoms of a situation becoming uncontrollable.

But it was too late. The peace with Israel had violated the sensibilities of even the most moderate elements in the Muslim Brothers. In an atmosphere already heavy with fundamentalist stirrings, and with the tensions of a deteriorating economic situation, Sadat's peace offered conclusive proof of the corruption of rulers and a legitimation of fundamentalist principles. The drama of the final struggle had begun.

The ideologues and leaders of the Muslim Brothers interpreted the situation in terms of their philosophy. Meanwhile, on the streets, in the mosques, and on the university campuses a burgeoning "new fundamentalism" of charismatic shaykhs, youth movements, and revolutionary cells had also been developing. Parallel to the pronouncements of *al-Da'wah* and other activities of the Muslim Brothers, this fluid revolution was

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heading toward a violent militancy, and it reached a climax of a sort with the assassination of Sadat in October 1981.

For Muslim fundamentalists in Egypt, Sadat's assassination marked the opening of the longed-for "reconquest" of the nation in the name of Islam. All fundamentalist camps girded themselves for a continuing struggle, hoping at least that Hosni Mubarak, an uncertain new leader, might permit them an interim of renewed activities before the next storm. The leaders of the Muslim Brothers, their main publication still banned, continued quietly to proclaim their ideas. Then in the last months of 1982, *al-Da'wah* resumed publication, now from Vienna, and again under the editorship of al-Tilmisani. Prominent in its pages was an undisguised sympathy for Sadat's assassins, as well as a continuing portrayal of the peace with Israel as a central symptom of the Islamic malaise. And for once, history seemed to be moving in a direction compatible with the fundamentalists' dreams.

Before the assassination of Sadat, Egypt had proceeded slowly and hesitantly in normalizing relations with Israel, but the hesitancy was controlled, part of an overall strategy of rewarding Israel with increments of "peace" in return for its gradual, voluntary shrinkage. After Sadat's death, controlled hesitation became a directed gallop. Egypt removed its ambassador from Tel Aviv after the initial violent phase of the Lebanese war; anti-Israel attacks intensified in Egypt's press; Egyptian War Minister Abu Ghazala remarked that in the event of a war between Israel and an Arab state, Egypt would be unable to stand aside; President Mubarak welcomed Yasir Arafat to Egypt; Egypt negotiated a political return to the Islamic and Arab fold; during the Islamic conference in Morocco (January 1984), Mubarak reportedly asserted that "Camp David is dead" (this was later officially denied); and Sadat's closest colleagues were removed from the ruling party's list of candidates prior to elections in May 1984.

To be sure, the alterations in policy after Sadat's death were not *directly* due to fundamentalist influence. In Sadat's absence, and perhaps in part because of it, other factors as well touched the essence of the peace policy and began to cast doubt on its practicability. These included the continued unrelenting opposition of the other Arab states and the PLO to entering negotiations with Israel; the resultant Arab political boycott of Egypt; and Israel's continued "intransigence" on the Palestinian issue, as expressed most dramatically in its war against the PLO in Lebanon. These historical realities challenged the basic premises of the Egyptian philosophy of peace, whose proponents had sincerely believed in a gradual Arab acceptance of a (reduced) Israel and a new Israeli "realism." Thus Mubarak and his colleagues, though remaining committed to the goals of Sadat's policy, could not have been expected to remain totally steadfast in implementing it, particularly not in the absence of the martyred charismatic leader. The fact that the formal peace remained even minimally in place was a tribute to the regime's hope that somehow more auspicious days would come.

But if fundamentalist challenges were not directly responsible for the misfortunes suffered by the peace, indirectly they were greatly influential. The assassination itself, as a revolutionary fundamentalist act, served warning to Egypt that the tide of Islam, having begun to rise after the Six-Day War, would henceforth more aggressively lap at the foundations of alien domination and that the peace with Israel, the symbol of all that was wrong, was destined to be swept away in the great cleansing. Only this would insure the revival of Islam as Egypt's guiding hand.

The continuing strength of fundamentalism in Egypt, manifested in revolutionary cells and in various cultural and religious activities, was not easily to be dismissed. Every time it was announced that another fundamentalist conspiracy had been thwarted, one could be sure that the country's secular leaders had been made aware of the many who viewed them as Zionist lackeys and enemies of Islam. And if suppression was one prong of their effort to contain fundamentalist influence, appeasement was the other. Not by chance was it that the meeting of the Organization of Muslim States in Morocco, where Egypt was seeking reentrance into the Muslim fold, became the venue of Mubarak's alleged proclamation that Camp David was dead, a statement obviously directed toward Muslim circles in Egypt as much as toward the delegates in Morocco.

V

THE fundamentalist goal of destroying the peace and thereby "saving Islam" in Egypt was, then, partially successful, coinciding as it did with Mubarak's own interim interests. Deflating the peace became a kind of policy-by-default during the period after Sadat's assassination while Egypt waited for some indication of the ultimate intentions both of Israel and of the other Arab parties.

Today the peace still hangs in the balance, while Islamic fundamentalism in Egypt continues to grow in social and political strength. Though the fundamentalists are internally fragmented into diverse factions, from the Muslim Brothers—"moderate" by today's standards—to the independent militant movements of Muslim youth, the *jama'āt*, and the revolutionary *jihad* groups, all nurture the hope (bordering on expectation) that Islam will eventually rule and pervade the whole of Egyptian life, whether through new and comprehensive legislation or through the total transformation of Egypt into an "Islamic Republic."

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In keeping with their practical orientation, the fundamentalists work hard to achieve their goal. Their ideologues write and speak. Their activists organize and mobilize. Their publicists persuade. Their revolutionaries conspire. Their preachers entreat. All this, in a milieu which for several years now has generously repaid the fundamentalists' efforts with a growing positive response. This response is itself linked to the widespread conviction (in Egypt and elsewhere in the Middle East) that modernization and successful competition with the West will not come about by means of borrowed Western political ideas and systems, but only by means of a return to the sources and earliest examples of Islam's civilization.

It is true that the spread of fundamentalism in Egypt in recent years does not yet appear to have taken on a sharply defined political form; the government is strong, and the "Islamicizing" process is a gradual one. Still, various developments traceable to fundamentalist influence have emerged and seem destined to expand. These include the partially successful Muslim demand for increased legislation in accordance with the *Shari'ah* (Muslim law); the standing of the Muslim Brothers in partnership with the revived Waf'd party in the May 1984 elections, which resulted in giving the Muslim Brothers some seats in the Parliament; the emergence of an Islamic opposition party, al-Ummah, which also appeared before the May 1984 elections; and the political "takeover" of campuses by fundamentalist groups.

Such highly specific and public forms of Islamic politics are not, however, the real measure of fundamentalist strength in Egypt. Rather, this strength resides in the extensive and general Islamicization now taking place in the hinterland, and which must be reckoned one of the strongest forces in Egypt's recent history. The goal of the fundamentalists is to make of hinterland and political front one and the same thing, thus bringing about the total Islamicization both of Egyptian politics and of Egyptian society.

The peace with Israel will remain a central issue for the fundamentalists. They will certainly continue to preach and struggle against it no matter how feeble it may grow and even if the government itself attacks it. For as we have seen, in fundamentalist thinking, the peace is an abominable extension of the basic cancer that threatens the lifeblood of Islam. Moreover, the anti-peace banner serves as a focal point for the campaign to rid Egypt of all its difficulties—political, social, and economic—through a return to fundamentalist Islam.

The Egyptian movements are further emboldened by the moral and political support they have garnered from colleagues in surrounding countries. Thus, recent reports of the almost total Islamicization of the Sudan, Egypt's erstwhile good neighbor and fellow fighter against fundamentalist intrusions, has caused tremendous worry in Cairo. And then there is the continuing example of Iran, and the revolutionary terrorist acts in Lebanon. Such developments remind us once again that what we have been discussing as an aspect of local Egyptian politics is really part of a larger and much more threatening regional trend.

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Totalitarianism Today

Arch Puddington

THERE is an understandable tendency for many in the democratic world to identify the totalitarian phenomenon exclusively with its most dramatic and brutal manifestations: Nazi Germany, the Soviet Union under Stalin, China during the Cultural Revolution, the invasions of Hungary and Czechoslovakia, martial law in Poland. Certainly terror and raw military might are intrinsic to the initial attainment of Communist or fascist domination, and the threat of renewed terror plays an essential role in insuring popular obedience once power has been consolidated. Yet it is not the willingness to employ violence which distinguishes a totalitarian regime from traditional dictatorships of the authoritarian kind. As those who deny the continuing validity of the totalitarian political model never cease to point out, traditional right-wing dictatorships frequently act with abject cruelty in their attempts to subdue political opponents. Rather, the distinctive feature of the totalitarian system, and Communism most notably of all, is the elaborately constructed apparatus of control which is inevitably set in place after the seizure of power.

Among authoritarian regimes, there is nothing comparable to the calculation, creative thinking, and long-range planning that totalitarianism devotes to regulating the most mundane details of an individual's existence. And while the ultimate goal is nothing less than the wholesale transformation of society, the most important byproduct of what is euphemistically called the "revolutionary process" is to render the party-state practically invulnerable to internal challenge. Where maintaining power is the objective, not even the most vicious junta can compete with the sloppiest totalitarian regime. Poland's Communists, corrupt, cynical, having failed at every aspect of governing society, were still able to crush an overwhelmingly popular mass movement, and to do so with awesome efficiency. It can thus be said without exaggeration that martial law was the most signal achievement of Communism during its nearly forty years of rule in Poland.

Few Communists, of course, would point with any pride to the reassertion of party domination in Poland; the overriding purpose of party rule, after all, is the *prevention* of precisely the kind of political deterioration which, in the official view, made General Jaruzelski's extraordinary measures an unfortunate necessity. For Communists today, the ideal society is not one defined by its vast gulags, but one where people accept the rules and restrictions of the new order as a matter of course. No less an authority than Lenin provided one of the most candid descriptions of how the well-run totalitarian society of the future should function. In a famous passage in *State and Revolution*, he wrote:

> When all have learned to manage . . . the escape from this national accounting and control will inevitably become so increasingly difficult, such a rare exception, and will probably be accompanied by such swift punishment . . . that soon the necessity of observing the simple, fundamental rules of everyday social life in common will have become a habit.

This passage ironically was included in the midst of a discourse on the eventual "withering away" of the state, and it is a cogent reminder that the link between Communism and statism was understood from the outset, at least by the more prescient Bolsheviks. Lenin foresaw, and approved of, the bureaucratic methods his successors have perfected in order to execute his system of "accounting and control." And while Lenin's vision has yet to be fully realized, the current generation of Soviet leaders still seeks a society where discipline and conformity are the overarching values, a society, in the recent words of a high party official from Estonia, where "every member would unconditionally carry out all rules and commands, do everything he's supposed to, and not violate any form of discipline. . . ."

There is nothing more fundamental to this official's "ideal order" than the state's ability to regulate the movement of its citizens. During their nearly seventy years of rule, the Soviets have developed a series of policies and structures which together have given the state unprecedented control over movements across and within its borders. Nowhere in the world is the role of the border guard as exalted as in the USSR. Where in the United States efforts of the Immigration and Naturalization Service to stem the flow of illegal

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aliens are routinely treated with derision by the press, the Soviet media feature regular accounts of the heroic exploits of the men who guard the country's sacred soil. Typically, press stories give the distorted impression that the border guards' major job is keeping subversive elements out, when in fact almost all their efforts are geared to snaring defecting Soviet citizens. The Soviets, moreover, are altogether prepared to share their expertise with fraternal allies. Recently Bulgaria awarded high state honors to the KGB officials who administer training courses for Bulgarian border-guard commanders, citing their "many years of all-'round assistance in perfecting the protection" of the Bulgarian borders.

The Soviets give no less scrupulous attention to regulating their own citizens' internal movements.* To this end, the Kremlin requires that all Soviet citizens maintain a wide variety of internal documents. In contrast to the United States, where the Social Security card is the only universal personal document, Soviet citizens must keep an internal passport, work book, housing papers, medical documentation, records of military service, special documents for travel to border regions, vacation passes, and written authorizations granting permission to travel around the country for job purposes. The most important personal paper, the internal passport, is a substantial document, running to fourteen pages and containing such information as the bearer's nationality, social class, records of marriage and divorce, and information about his work history. The work book contains the individual's complete job history, including sanctions for poor performance, difficulties with the law, and reasons for leaving a particular job.

Compared with the persecution of a Sakharov or Shcharansky, the internal-documents system is hardly the stuff of high drama. Yet as an instrument of totalitarian control, the internal passport, work book, and other papers occupy a crucial place, as important in many ways as police-state terror. Hannah Arendt described the introduction of the work book as having "transformed the whole Russian worker class officially into a gigantic forced-labor force." If it is no longer accurate to characterize the Soviet Union as one massive slave-labor camp—as against the approximately 15 million prisoners serving sentences in labor camps at any one time under Stalin, the figure today is about 2 million—the fact remains that the internal-documents system guarantees the systematic intrusion of the state into the most ordinary details of a person's life. It also has substantially contributed to the attainment of the Leninist utopia where escape from rules, restrictions, and prohibitions is extremely difficult. A black mark inscribed in a young man's work book will follow him, from job to job, for the rest of his life, as will descriptions of scrapes with the police or questions concerning his political outlook.

Moreover, the quite particular way in which internal documents are used by Soviet bureaucrats simplifies the implementation of repressive measures which, in less tidy dictatorships, would provoke widespread and unfavorable publicity. The exclusion of ethnic or religious groups from important jobs or university admissions also becomes a relatively routine procedure when the individual's nationality appears in his internal passport. In addition, the passport system creates daunting obstacles for those with opposition views, whether they be human-rights advocates, religious believers, or independent-minded artists. In a huge country like the Soviet Union, simply meeting and discussing common ideas becomes a formidable undertaking when the authorities maintain constant watch on one's movements, particularly since there is no such thing as the "right" to move about as one wishes; these problems are compounded by limitations on private automobile ownership and the state's ability to withdraw the "privilege" of telephone ownership at any time.

RESTRICTIONS on internal movement and communication are but one of the problems faced by the democratic opposition in what appears to be a losing struggle for survival. Especially since the accession to power of the late Yuri Andropov, the Kremlin has introduced a series of new measures, or, more accurately, reintroduced or refined old measures, to strengthen the state's hand in its campaign to eliminate all manifestations of dissent.

The most widely known innovation is the sentencing of political prisoners to terms in mental hospitals, a policy which, typically, has been emulated by a number of satellite regimes. Two important purposes are served by the use of psychiatric terror: first, it injects an added element of fear into the campaign against dissent, since Soviet citizens are all too aware that the "therapy" in Soviet psychiatric hospitals consists almost solely of heavy doses of drugs. Given over an extended period, this "treatment" can produce irreversible brain damage; thus the prospect of a term in a mental hospital is far more frightening than a stint in a labor camp. Second, by packing political prisoners off to mental institutions, the state is able to punish its opponents through exclusively bureaucratic channels, eliminating the need for public trials which sometimes draw the scrutiny of the Western press.

Psychiatric abuse has not been totally ignored; frequent articles have appeared in Western newspapers, and the practice has been condemned by world psychiatric bodies. Considerably less coverage, however, has been given to a number of recent laws and decrees designed to further intimidate the opposition and, as well, to reduce contacts between the Soviet people and foreign visitors. These measures include a broadening of the

* For a fuller discussion of the Soviet internal-documents system, see *The Other Establishment* by Thomas B. Smith, Regnery Gateway, 205 pp., $18.95.

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definition of treason to embrace practically all political offenses, a similar broadening of the interpretation of what constitutes "anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda," harsher sentences for Soviet citizens carrying out "anti-state" activities with the assistance of funds from abroad (a measure which could be applied to a dissident writer whose works were published in the West, or to Jewish refuseniks receiving money from the United States), and a law which makes it a crime to transmit "work-related" secrets to foreigners. Here again, the definition of work-related secrets is vague enough to be applicable to just about anything having to do with Soviet industry or trade.

The most chilling new law, harking back to similar practices under Stalin, deals with the treatment of prisoners currently serving terms in prison camps. In recent years, failure to obey camp rules was dealt with through administrative sanctions: that is, by a term in an isolation cell or a reduction in the inmate's pay. Under the new law, prisoners guilty of "malicious disobedience" of camp regulations are subject to criminal prosecution, and prisoners can be given extended terms in the camp on the sole basis of testimony from the camp administrator. This law too has been drafted with purposeful vagueness; "malicious disobedience" can mean whatever the authorities want it to mean, and a political prisoner faces the real possibility of having his sentence lengthened simply for refusing to renounce his convictions.

From a narrowly legal standpoint, the whole series of new laws enacted under Andropov and Chernenko are superfluous, since Soviet legislation dealing with crimes against the state has traditionally been written in such a way as to insure the widest possible application. The major, perhaps sole, intent of the new measures would thus appear to be intimidation. And there is some evidence to suggest that the Kremlin's strategy is paying dividends. Recently, for example, several prominent political prisoners have issued public recantations in exchange for pardons from lengthy terms in the gulag. Recantations are big media events in the Soviet Union, and are shrewdly exploited for their propaganda value. A public recantation is an especially humiliating experience, as the individual is compelled not merely to renounce long-held political beliefs, but to denounce friends, acknowledge the insidious influence of "foreign" elements in leading him astray, and declare undying love for the Soviet Union and the ideals it embodies. In one incident, a Ukrainian dissident characterized former associates in the democratic movement as "traitors to the fatherland" and a "fifth column" in the country, and declared that the human-rights movement was nothing more than the creation of Western intelligence agencies. Other dissidents were described as lacking courage or the dupes of Western imperialism. The decision to disavow friends and convictions was reached under extreme duress; in his mid-fifties, this man, already serving a long term in the camps, faced the prospect of an additional term for refusing to cooperate and was thus confronted with the prospect of near-certain death in the gulag.

Political dissidents are not the only targets of what some see as the gradual re-Stalinization of Soviet society. While the Kremlin—and, indeed, with the exception of Poland, the Communist world in general—has been highly successful in minimizing overtly political forms of nonconformity, all Communist societies suffer from a striking increase in what is described as a breakdown in socialist discipline. Problems with which Western societies are only too familiar—crime, high rates of divorce, alcoholism, even drug addiction—have become widespread in the Communist world as well. Communist countries, moreover, face an almost universal problem of declining labor productivity, a phenomenon largely caused by the idiosyncrasies of centrally planned economies, but which the Communists themselves attribute to an unwillingness of their workers to work hard enough.

Communist propaganda traditionally insisted that social pathology and worker indiscipline were the exclusive province of the capitalist world, and it is only in the past few years that the Soviets have begun to own up to the reality of their own social crises. More recently, and especially since the death of Leonid Brezhnev, the Soviets have given indications of a determination to attack their social ills through a variety of punitive and intimidatory policies. One sign is the renewed use of one of the staples of the Stalinist arsenal, the anonymous denunciation. The practice of denouncing one's neighbors, co-workers, or even family members was widespread during the height of the Great Terror. Sometimes denunciations were resorted to as a means of gaining some coveted possession—say, a neighbor's apartment. More often, however, denunciations served as a form of self-protection, the ultimate demonstration of loyalty to Stalin and the Soviet state. Eventually, denunciations became so pervasive and uncontrolled that the authorities ended the practice.

Today the use of denunciations appears to be winning increased support from the police. In certain cities, forms have been distributed on which Soviet citizens can inform on their neighbors or co-workers without fear of discovery. A new twist has been added. Formerly, the person making the denunciation was compelled to write out the relevant details, thus running some, albeit minimal, risk of being revealed as a snoop. The new forms, however, greatly simplify matters by providing separate boxes listing various offenses which can be checked off by the person making the denunciation. Among the listed categories are: living off "casual earnings," refusing to pay alimony, having "no place of work," drinking to excess or using drugs, or, a catchall, violating "the rules of socialist communal life."

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A similar innovation has been developed by the Komsomol, the Communist youth organization, as part of a public campaign to ferret out violators of work discipline. The centerpiece of this campaign, dubbed Operation Chronometer, is a coupon, published in various newspapers, on which readers can write in and provide specific accusations against alleged work shirkers and "truants."

The Soviet Union is not the only Communist country to have resorted to "extraordinary measures" in an effort to deal with mounting social and economic crises. Rumania has conducted show trials for workers found drinking on the job, and has made it a criminal offense for a worker to leave his work station without permission. A series of decrees by the Ceausescu regime has at one stroke reduced the national standard of living while providing harsh penalties for violations of labor discipline. One new law has effectively established a class of indentured servants by tying workers entering the labor market to their first job for five years. Another measure has abolished the minimum pay a worker can earn at a particular job. Nor has the regime ignored the agricultural sector. The size of private plots which collective farmers are entitled to own has been reduced, and peasants have been compelled to abandon single-family houses for multidwelling units.

REGARDING freedom of the press, it is only dimly recognized that the kind of censorship exercised by the Kremlin, and adopted by every other Communist country, is distinctly different from the haphazard censorship carried out by non-Communist dictatorships. The term *censorship*, in fact, is somewhat misleading in describing what exists in the Communist world, since Communist press policies seek not only to prevent the publication of observations or facts which contradict the official position on this or that issue, but also to shape, direct, and manipulate public opinion. News management is, to be sure, a more complicated enterprise than in the past. The endless paeans to the leadership which were once the distinguishing features of the Communist press are no longer acceptable to a better-educated population. Moreover, Communist regimes cannot ignore the reality that their citizens have access to alternative media in foreign radio-broadcast services such as the Voice of America, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, and the BBC. The Communist media thus face a formidable task: to convince their citizens of the wisdom of official policies and the superiority of Communism as a system, and to do this cleverly enough to be minimally acceptable to a more critical audience.

Among the Soviet-bloc countries, Poland has for some time enjoyed a reputation for cultural and journalistic independence. Nonetheless, the role of the censor was considered every bit as important in pre-Solidarity Poland as in such bastions of Stalinist orthodoxy as Rumania and Bulgaria. Indeed, as Jane Leftwich Curry points out in a study of Polish censorship in the 1970's,* the press was more rigidly controlled during the regime of Edward Gierek, much praised as a "liberal" Communist by many in the West, than during the rule of Gierek's predecessor, Wladyslaw Gomulka, an obedient follower of the Soviet line. Curry bases her conclusion on an analysis of some 700 pages of documents issued by the Polish censor's office and smuggled to the West by a defecting censor in 1977. These documents represent a gold mine of information about one of the basic control mechanisms of the totalitarian state.

In Poland, and throughout the Soviet bloc as well, the job of the censor is much simplified by the self-censorship which working journalists accept as a matter of course. By the 1970's most Polish journalists had lived through some three decades of Communist rule, during which they had learned the futility of attempting to challenge the prevailing doctrine. The state, for its part, could discipline errant writers by denying them jobs or refusing to print ideologically unacceptable articles. Another weapon at the state's disposal is its monopoly on the supply of paper, which can be withheld from journals that demonstrate too much independence.

Gierek saw the censor as occupying a quite specific position in helping to mobilize public support for the regime's economic strategy. Whatever legitimacy Gierek earned was predicated on the fulfillment of his vow of economic betterment, particularly for Poland's restive workers. A crucial element in this strategy was what came to be known as the "propaganda of success," which amounted to an endless stream of articles and analyses extolling Gierek's policies and ignoring the nation's gathering crises. Thus, central to the censor's mandate was seeing that nothing reach print which could remotely be construed as critical of the economic course or which might raise questions in the minds of foreign investors about the country's stability. The list of forbidden subjects reached well beyond questions of economic policy, narrowly defined; it included the total elimination of references to environmental pollution, food contamination, agricultural disease, and other health-related issues.

In similar fashion, the censorship system was used to preclude debate on a whole series of social problems. No mention was to be made of the endemic housing shortage, or of the poor quality of newly built housing. Similarly, informed discussion of agricultural issues was impeded by the decision to eliminate references to the fact that private farming performed better than the collectivized sector.

ANOTHER subject which drew the censor's careful scrutiny was religion. While even in pre-Solidarity days the Polish Catholic

* *The Black Book of Polish Censorship*, edited and translated by Jane Leftwich Curry, Vintage, 451 pp., $8.95.

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Church enjoyed a measure of autonomy unknown in other Communist countries, references to the Church or religion in general were frequently changed or deleted. The censorship of religious material went well beyond statements which could be interpreted as critical of Communism; the goal was to keep references to religion, no matter how politically innocuous, to the minimum. For example, churches were denied permission to print cards which could be used by parishioners to inform the priest of their illness. Any mention of the popularity of Church-sponsored activities was forbidden even in the Church press. Also censored were sociological surveys which reported a high degree of religious belief among the Polish people, and statements which appeared to link social problems to a loosening of religious faith, as in the following sentence, which was deleted from a parish bulletin: "The Church sees the cause of all of this [various social ills] in the fact that people have turned their back on Christ. . . ."

The censors also participated in the ongoing process of rewriting Polish history. It was, in fact, instructions to falsify information about the Katyn forest incident, in which thousands of Polish officers, including his own grandfather, were murdered by Soviet troops during World War II, which prompted the defection of the censor who smuggled these materials out with him. In this particular case, censors were compelled to change the date of the massacre from 1940 to 1941 in order to remove any evidence suggesting possible Soviet guilt. Another typical example of the doctoring of historical fact was the purging of positive references to the Polish forces who fought with the Allies at the battle of Monte Cassino from a book of wartime underground writings.

If the Polish censors harbored doubts about the handling of sensitive historical issues, they could, if they chose, turn to their Soviet comrades for advice. The Soviets maintain a large press section in their Warsaw embassy, whose major function is reading and criticizing the Polish press, right down to the regional level. It was not uncommon during the 1970's, and presumably is not uncommon today, for Polish journalists to receive a telephone call from a bureaucrat in the Soviet embassy with pointed remarks about the treatment of a particular issue. The Soviets also prepared lists of people and events from Soviet history to which no reference was to be made in the Polish press. Whether it was due to Soviet pressure or, and this is more likely, a conscious decision of the regime, the 1970's brought a notably different approach to the treatment of Stalinism in the Polish press. Where previously it had been common to blame Poland's difficulties during the early years of Communism on the "excesses" of the Polish Stalinist leadership, under Gierek references to Stalinism were almost automatically expunged from press accounts.

As Curry points out, a more accurate picture of Polish life in the 1970's could be gleaned from material written by Polish journalists but deleted by the censors than from the distorted pieces which actually reached print. With the single exception of accounts of Nazi brutality during the war, modern Polish history has been thoroughly distorted, reformulated, and falsified. Censorship under Gierek was approached with all the high seriousness of a five-year plan, and was executed with far more success than Gierek's grandiose economic schemes. Gierek, moreover, invested great hopes in his censorship apparatus. At one time he actually considered transforming the censor's office into a kind of apprenticeship school for future journalists, who would undergo a period of training as censors before going on to regular jobs on newspapers, journals, and in the broadcast media. Gierek's plan was never implemented, but there is an unquestionable logic to the notion that, by temperament, experience, and philosophy, no one is better qualified to manage the news in the Communist world than the censor.

IF FOR Communism the censor represents the ideal writer, it follows that the atheist represents the best qualified clergyman. With the exception of Albania, which claims to have achieved the first atheistic society and where houses of worship have been transformed into museums of atheism, Communist countries have abandoned, for the time being, the original goal of the total elimination of religion. They are content rather to control religion, and to restrict the Church's role in society to the most narrow functions. To be sure, Communists continue to hope that at some future time people will simply cease believing in God, and to further this process the Soviets and several other Communist regimes still publish anti-religious propaganda and support "research institutes" dedicated to the propagation of atheistic themes. At the same time, Communist authorities are unbending in the persecution of believers who belong to denominations which refuse to accept state domination. Nevertheless, unless confronted with outright resistance, Communist regimes prefer to control religion rather than suppress it.

Communists today approach the job of controlling the churches much as they approach censorship. The preparation and implementation of policies are carefully planned, and the bureaucracy which monitors the activities of the churches (or "sects" in Communist parlance) is staffed by party officials who, while not zealots, are quite clear about what they want to achieve. For obvious reasons, the bureaucracy which controls the churches in the Soviet Union takes precautions to avoid publicity in the Western press. We are, however, fortunate in having a document which provides valuable insight into the inner working of the apparatus of religious control, a report written by Vasili Furov, deputy chairman of the Soviet Council on Religious Affairs, the agency which oversees religious activities throughout the coun-

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try. The report, which was smuggled to the West, focuses on the current condition of the Russian Orthodox Church, the USSR's largest denomination and, with 50 million members, one of the largest churches in the world.*

Furov claims, *inter alia*, that the council "controls the Synod" of the Orthodox Church, reviews the appointments of major Church officials, and approves all decisions before they are acted on by the Church leadership. Although allowance must be made for the report's generally self-serving tone, its meticulously detailed information about Church affairs suggests that if Furov's claims are exaggerated, it is only by a little, and that he is probably right in asserting that the Orthodox Church today "is basically a product of the Soviet era."

The current objective of Soviet religious policy is to transform clergymen into transmission belts linking the state with religious believers. Obviously, the role of the priest in the struggle for "peace" is not ignored. The ideal clergyman is one who can effectively represent the Soviet position on peace at various international congresses and before such groups as the World Council of Churches.

This ideal cleric may believe in God but, according to Furov, he refrains from pressing his convictions on his parishioners with too much enthusiasm. Furov cites the rueful comment of one priest: "Authorities of the state ideological system have succeeded in turning the priests into clergymen. Priests and clergymen—servants of the cult—that is not one and the same thing. The priest is a spiritual man, but the servant of the cult is a tradesman and a wage earner."

One obvious question raised by Furov's report is how an official of a state agency got access to the content of sermons and the passing remarks of various priests. The answer is simple. As the report makes abundantly clear, the Council on Religious Affairs maintains an extensive intelligence-gathering operation whose focus goes beyond overtly political questions. The report is replete with gossip about the private lives and human failings of various priests; presumably such information is stored away for future use in convincing priests to adopt a more cooperative attitude in dealings with the state.

The report is also interesting for the light it sheds on the state's role in influencing the curriculum and administration of Orthodox seminaries. The Council participates in the selection of faculty, helps choose textbooks, determines how Soviet history is to be presented, and even advises Church officials on the preparation of curriculum dealing with religious subjects.

At one point Furov observes that, by manipulating the seminary course material, the state hopes to inculcate in new priests a "spirit of materialism" which "will undercut the religious and mystical ideal of the future clergy" and "bring them to understand their own uselessness as clergymen." The utter cynicism of this statement should disabuse Westerners of the notion that the Kremlin's relatively tolerant attitude toward the Church (as compared with its uncompromising hostility in the past) signifies a genuine coming to terms with religious faith.

If more evidence of the unchanged Communist view of religion is required, one need look no further than the Kremlin's most loyal satellite, Czechoslovakia, where the regime has been forced to contend with a modest revival of interest in the Catholic Church, particularly among the young. An indication of the vast array of weapons at the regime's disposal can be seen in its current campaign to discourage schoolchildren from attending classes on religious subjects. The centerpiece of this campaign is the establishment of what are known as atheistic commissions in the schools, with teachers as commission members. The commission's principal assignment is to persuade parents not to enroll their children in religious classes; if the parents balk, they are reminded that religious belief can be a serious stumbling block to university admission or better-paying jobs. Bonuses are handed out to teachers who are successful in minimizing enrollment in religious classes, and there are reports that children who insist on attending religious classes have been subjected to ridicule before their classmates.

These are, of course, mild forms of pressure when compared with other frequently employed punishments—the jailing of believers on charges of smuggling Bibles into the country or the sentencing of priests for performing Mass without "state sanction." Totalitarian regimes are not alone in their willingness to persecute priests. The strict and scrupulously enforced regimentation of religion is, however, a purely totalitarian innovation. And so, for that matter, is the peculiarly totalitarian capacity to harass, humiliate, taunt, and discriminate against children for no other reason than an avowed belief in God.

AN ARGUMENT that is frequently advanced against the usefulness of the totalitarian model is the thesis that the admittedly reprehensible course taken in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe is not being copied by "revolutionary" regimes in the Third World. Thus the refrain that Cuba, or Vietnam, or Grenada, or Nicaragua is pursuing a "different" road to socialism, one designed to avoid the "pitfalls" of Soviet-style repression and overbureaucratization while respecting the cultural and historical traditions of the particular society. Yet when one examines the techniques of domestic control—the keys, really, of the Communist system—the overriding reality is the similarity in the pattern of totalitarian development between the Soviet Union and Marxist and

* The Furov report has appeared in the United States in the publication, *Religion in Communist Dominated Areas.*

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radical Third World regimes. And the great disparities in geography, culture, and level of economic development make the similarities all the more striking.

If anything, indeed, the policies adopted by Cuba and Vietnam more closely resemble those which obtained in the regimes of Eastern Europe in the early, formative years of Communist control than the less oppressive atmosphere which has prevailed since the death of Stalin. The pattern is distressingly similar: reeducation for those who refuse to conform or whose class backgrounds are suspect; vast concentration camps which provide a pool of slave labor for the public-works projects that will form the infrastructure of the new society; hostility to private property—including home ownership and the right to keep a few farm animals; persecution of the churches; transformation of independent trade unions into state-controlled labor fronts; establishment of neighborhood surveillance committees; subjugation, repression, and expulsion of minorities who do not "fit in."

A clear parallel can be discerned in the approach to political reeducation. A Vietnamese official, writing in the *People's Army Publication*, described the process in words which have a decidedly Leninist ring:

> Reeducation is a meticulous and long-range process. Management must be tight, continuous, comprehensive, and specific. We must manage each person. We must manage their thoughts and actions, words and deeds, philosophy of life and ways of livelihood, social relationships and travel.... We must closely combine management and education with interrogation.

Accounts of life in the Vietnamese gulag are grimly reminiscent of the prison-camp literature written by the unlucky victims of assorted other Communist regimes. Much emphasis is placed on confessions; prisoners must write and rewrite their life histories until a document with the proper class perspective is achieved. The confessions are then read before the assembled camp administrators and prisoner population, and prisoners are encouraged to criticize the confessions in such a way as to foment hatred among fellow inmates. Further to discourage prisoner solidarity, inmates are constantly shuffled from one camp to another, a procedure which makes it extremely difficult for relatives to maintain contact with husbands, fathers, or brothers. The more gruesome details of camp life—backbreaking work, wretched food, general squalor, widespread use of torture—are distressingly familiar to anyone with a passing acquaintance with accounts of camp life in the Soviet Union, China, or Eastern Europe.

In building up its police-state, Vietnam has clearly drawn inspiration from its sworn enemy, China, which remains a strong totalitarian society. "In its regimentation and singular lack of privacy, life in China is not much different from life in an army barracks," concluded New York *Times* correspondent Fox Butterfield after completing an assignment there a few years ago. The pivotal figure in the Chinese system is the party secretary at the workplace or enterprise level. Each workplace retains a sealed file for each worker in which is recorded such information as the party's evaluation and any political charges brought against the individual by anonymous informers. The file also contains the worker's class background for three generations—whether his father or grandfather were landlords, capitalists, or peasants. The worker cannot marry or divorce without the party secretary's permission; he must also obtain permission for something as seemingly routine as traveling for more than one day.

Another important mechanism of state power is the urban street committee. The committees have wide authority; they combine the functions of employment agency and housing authority. Committee members have the right to enter a person's home at any hour; they also report to the authorities on such intimate matters as presumed sexual liaisons between unmarried Chinese. The street committees also check women's menstrual cycles; if a woman's period is late, she is instructed to obtain an abortion. (Conversely, in Rumania, where abortions are illegal, a new policy now being implemented requires women factory workers to obtain blood tests each month; if those found to be pregnant are no longer pregnant a month later, they are liable to penalties.)

Cuba is also notable for its determination to intrude into the private affairs of the individual. Fidel Castro's persecution of homosexuals has been much commented on, and is one aspect of his rule which has alienated, minimally, his supporters on the Western Left. But two points about Castro's anti-homosexual policies need to be emphasized. The first is that while, as apologists for the regime often point out, a contempt for homosexuality is not unknown in Latin American culture, only Castro has actually translated these prejudices into a national policy of outright persecution. The second point is the legislative overkill employed to insure that no manifestation of homosexual conduct go unpunished. A vast body of law has been enacted in whole or in part to deal with homosexuality, much of it based on laws adopted in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, including the Law against Extravagance, the Law against Public Scandal, the Law on Dangerousness, the Law on the Normal Development of Youth and the Family, and the Law on Pre-Delinquency, a measure which categorizes the homosexual not only as immoral but as a *potential* criminal subject to punishment if he cannot be found guilty of specific criminal acts.

In general, politics determines just about every aspect of the individual Cuban's private life: the

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choice of a marriage partner, a decision to seek a divorce, where one lives and works, the friends one associates with. Being seen with the wrong people can have unpleasant and long-lasting consequences. Each person applying for admission to a university or even trade school must submit documentation on his political reliability. These forms are completed by members of the Committee in Defense of the Revolution, the ubiquitous cadre organization which constitutes the basic layer of the totalitarian state. A typical form, in this case for an institute for fishermen, asks such questions as: "Does he [the applicant] associate with people unfriendly to the Revolution?" "Do you know if the comrade holds religious beliefs?" "Does he maintain relations with persons from abroad?" "From what country?" "Does the comrade associate with antisocial elements?"

AND what of Grenada and Nicaragua, the most recent models of Marxist-Leninist experimentation? In Grenada, a combination of factors prevented Maurice Bishop and his New Jewel Movement (NJM) comrades from advancing to the goal of a Sovietized social order. This failure should not, however, obscure an understanding of the NJM's long-range intentions. By October 1983, when the Grenadian revolution devoured itself, the New Jewel regime had already managed to destroy the independent press, expand the police and army (and launch an ambitious indoctrination campaign aimed primarily at the security forces), initiate island-wide domestic surveillance, seize the leadership of most trade unions, and jail several hundred Grenadians on political charges (taken proportionately, the number of political prisoners would have amounted to tens of thousands in the United States). As for their future plans, documents uncovered by the invading forces leave no doubt that Bishop and his colleagues were dedicated Communists, that in foreign affairs the NJM was firmly set within the Soviet orbit, and that the kind of society it wanted to build differed little from what exists in Bulgaria or East Germany.*

The plans for domestic surveillance were quite thorough. Principal targets were schools, churches, neighborhood organizations, and trade unions; anyone indiscreet enough to criticize the regime at the wrong forum often found himself imprisoned without charges. Reports on the political situation in each section of the island were filed by the security forces; these reports were minutely detailed, listing by name each person deemed hostile to the revolution. The Grenadians were also eager to obtain the advice and assistance of more experienced Soviet-bloc countries for a wide variety of undertakings, including the establishment of an apparatus of repression. They turned to the Vietnamese, no less, for assistance in setting up a program of political reeducation and to help devise "methods of dealing with lumpen elements."

The Grenadians likewise sought counsel from fraternal allies in their struggle to emasculate the churches. Even though the Grenadian churches never played a militant opposition role, the NJM perceived organized religion as an obstacle to the consolidation of social control. The regime monitored church services, kept tabs on those who met with the religious hierarchy, and apparently tapped the telephones of church officials deemed to have joined the counterrevolutionary camp. The Grenadians also asked the Cubans to share what they had learned while successfully stripping the Catholic Church of its role in civil society. The Cubans recommended, as first steps toward taking control of the churches, that a New Jewel official responsible for religious affairs be trained in Cuba and that a formal registration of churches and other associations be set up, a totalitarian device used throughout the Communist world as a means of subverting and dominating previously independent institutions.

A PATTERN of steady totalitarianization is also proceeding apace in Nicaragua. Unfortunately, many in the United States seem ignorant of or oblivious to the accumulated evidence of an emerging Soviet-style dictatorship there. In certain circles an attitude of "Let Nicaragua be Nicaragua" seems to prevail, the underlying premise being that if only the CIA and the contras would stop their harassment, then the pluralistic instincts of the Sandinistas would somehow prevail over their Leninist convictions.

The notion that American imperialism is responsible for the despotic path taken by the Sandinistas is as absurd as the thesis that the United States is to blame for the renewed Soviet crackdown on the dissident movement. Nor is the fact that the Sandinistas have moved only rather cautiously toward a Sovietized social order an indication of an underlying desire to follow a different and more democratic path to socialism. A number of East European regimes were cautious in the introduction of Communist policies; the fact that the Sandinistas have proceeded at an even slower pace is primarily due to the inescapable realities of geography.

The basic instrument of social control in Nicaragua is the Sandinista Defense Committee, an institution patterned after the Cuban Committee in Defense of the Revolution. The committees are run by Sandinista loyalists, and exist in most neighborhoods, especially poor neighborhoods. Like similar organizations in other Communist societies, the committees dispense housing and jobs, and control many aspects of daily life. In one other revealing way are the committees similar to the cadre structures in certain Communist regimes: like those postwar East European regimes in which members of the political police were

* See *The Grenada Papers*, edited by Paul Seabury and Walter A. McDougall, Institute for Contemporary Studies, 346 pp., $16.95.

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drawn largely from the ranks of former Nazis and fascists, many Sandinista Defense Committees have come to be dominated by former Somoza supporters, men and women who have found that snooping and spying can be a rewarding enterprise in dictatorships of both Right and Left.

The Defense Committees derive much of their power from their control over the distribution of ration coupons. Americans tend to identify rationing as the ultimate reflection of Communist economic failure; in fact, rationing can be a highly effective means of coercion. "A formidable form of blackmail," is how Carlos Alberto Montaner, a Cuban exile writer, has described rationing. "When you go with the rationing book to get your quota, you have the impression of being alive thanks to the government's generosity. . . . If you rebel, you can be left without food or clothing." In Nicaragua, too, the regime is making deliberate use of the rationing system to impose its will on the people. For example, workers are "asked" to participate in midnight-to-five work details in their neighborhoods. These projects often have no economic rationale; their purpose is to make workers more open to Sandinista propaganda, to convince the people that the Sandinistas are securely in control, and that to resist their will is futile. Those workers who do balk often have their ration coupons withheld. Alternatively, they may find themselves the target of the *turbas*, or mobs, organized bands of Sandinista thugs who carry out extralegal enforcement jobs for the regime. (An interesting parallel is the workers' militias which played an essential role in the 1948 Communist coup in Czechoslovakia.)

In education, indoctrination is the order of the day. Children are force-fed propaganda claiming that the Sandinistas are the only legitimate force in society. The much-heralded literacy program has been used primarily as a vehicle for such indoctrination and mobilization. The program's director has stated that "There is no education that is not political." Given the literacy campaign's essentially political mandate, it is hardly surprising that many observers are now raising serious questions about the program's educational achievements. On several occasions the regime has also made threatening gestures toward a takeover of the Catholic schools. Although spared for the moment, these schools are subject to constant inspections to determine if their curriculum conforms to Sandinista policy; the inspection teams include officials from Cuba and even the Soviet Union.

LENIN'S vision of a society where all would voluntarily yield to the dictates of the state has thus far eluded his successors. Some opposition has managed to survive, and in attempting to influence events in the Communist world, the democracies are not without resources; they may even soon find new means of undermining Communist rule through developments in the communications revolution.

We are, however, talking about nibbling at the margins of totalitarian society. The fundamental fact remains that, once in power, no Communist regime has yet to be dislodged by internal forces alone. As hated as Hudson Austin and Bernard Coard were after the murder of Maurice Bishop, they and their well-armed security forces could easily have held power had opposition been limited to the Grenadian people.

Today, then, the test of a serious anti-totalitarian policy lies in Nicaragua. Thus far, the Sandinistas have failed to win absolute domination over Nicaraguan society. For this, much credit is due to the twin pillars of internal opposition: the Catholic Church and the newspaper *La Prensa*. Nonetheless, a crucial part has been played by forces outside the country, by the contras, and by American foreign policy, a policy which has sought, in part, to prevent a consolidation of Sandinista power.

However, the main goal of American policy seems to be to stem Nicaraguan intervention in El Salvador and other Central American countries. This is a worthy goal; but there would be serious repercussions if a noninterventionist Nicaragua were to become the *sole* aim of American policy. Indeed, a few of the Sandinistas' shrewder American supporters are now saying that while the U.S. has a legitimate interest in a Sandinista agreement on hemispheric noninterference, we should abandon any effort to compel the Sandinistas to adopt some form of pluralistic government.

If the United States were to accept such a formula, the likely consequence would be the entrenchment of yet another totalitarian regime in this part of the world. Despite efforts to camouflage their real nature, the Sandinistas in fact appear to be rather orthodox Communists, deriving inspiration from Cuba, Vietnam, and the Soviet Union, lining up with the Soviet bloc in the struggle against "imperialism," and harboring strong prejudices against institutions which have somehow evaded state-party control. Left unmolested to pursue their own revolutionary path, the Sandinistas' course of action is all too predictable: the Catholic Church will be destroyed as an independent institution; *La Prensa* will be closed; the property of the middle class will be expropriated; agriculture will be collectivized; restrictions on internal movement and emigration will be imposed; "reeducation" and concentration camps for political prisoners will become a distinct possibility.

In the words of Alfonso Robelo, a former member of the post-Somoza Nicaraguan government who has since joined the exile opposition: "If the United States allows the 'Finlandization' of Nicaragua—that is, a situation where the present regime is accepted as long as it doesn't try to expand —then the Nicaraguan people are finished." The entire history of 20th-century totalitarianism, including its softer present-day manifestations in Eastern Europe, bears these words out and demands that they be heeded by the United States.

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Shakespeare in the Original

Fernanda Eberstadt

THIS year two radically new British editions of Shakespeare have begun to appear in print, one from Oxford University Press and the second from Cambridge University Press. Either can reasonably expect to become the standard classroom text for an entire generation to come. Since the Shakespeare our children grow up on will thus be in some respects a very different author from the one we have known, the occasion demands a look at the older editions which formed our conception of Shakespeare in this century, as well as an evaluation of the new man these fresh versions offer to future readers.

Two great editions of the 20th century have shaped critical understanding of the playwright today: the New Shakespeare (of which this year's Cambridge is a revision), begun in 1921 by Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch and John Dover Wilson; and the New Arden, started in 1946 under the general editorship of Una Ellis-Fermor and not yet complete. Both were sparked by a sequence of advances in textual scholarship which furthered dramatically our knowledge of Shakespeare, establishing a more certain chronology of the plays, casting light on the provenance and nature of quarto and folio, and turning the tide against the "disintegrationists" who believed a large part of the Shakespeare canon to be the work of inferior collaborators.

It is no coincidence that each of these two monumental undertakings, the New Shakespeare and the Arden, was begun in the aftermath of world war. The common impulse is clear. Shakespeare is an author, and an institution, so synonymous with England itself that to build a new and unassailably authoritative edition of the plays could be felt to be the first labor in the necessary rebirth of the nation after the trauma of war, if not in the construction of a better world. As Quiller-Couch and Dover Wilson wrote in their general introduction to the New Shakespeare in 1921, theirs was "the most auspicious time in history" for such an undertaking. But though both editions implicitly identify the state of the Shakespeare canon with the state of the British nation, they present very different conceptions of each.

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The New Shakespeare was executed almost singlehandedly by John Dover Wilson (Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch withdrew on completing the comedies). Dover Wilson began the series when he was forty and completed it in 1966 when he was eighty-five; he went blind on finishing the Sonnets.

Even in a tradition that includes Samuel Johnson and Alexander Pope, John Dover Wilson remains one of the most redoubtable of Shakespeare's editors, and certainly the greatest in our century. Above being a scholar, he was an educator and a nationalist—two dirty words today—who viewed the study of English literature as his country's best defense against bolshevism, fascism, and the threat of class warfare (a threat that in England between the wars seemed very real). An authority on Russia and its struggling revolutionary factions, he had had the willful perversity to publish, in 1914, an essay proclaiming that czarism was Russia's own peculiar version of democracy and would last a thousand years. Where his own country was concerned, however, Dover Wilson was more down-to-earth. He worked as an inspector of night schools for industrial workers in the North for over twenty years, founded an adult-education magazine in an age when such endeavors were unheard of, and served, among other public functions, on the influential Newbolt Commission which after World War I invented the study of English literature as we know it today. His career was devoted to putting into effect his conviction that higher education was an incitement not to anarchy but to patriotism, and that the loyalty and well-being of the working classes depended on their identification with a national culture.

As a young man, Dover Wilson had been taken up by the great triumvirate of English bibliographers, A.W. Pollard, R.B. McKerrow, and W.W. Greg, whose work shaped the Shakespeare canon we know today. As a result of their influence, Dover Wilson's choice of texts is both revolutionary and accurate. His interpretations of the plays, however, are another matter: they are of a wild and stubborn subjectivity, full of colorful conjecture and special pleading. Because Dover Wilson considered Shakespeare to be, like himself, a kind of miniature of England and a lone defender of the free world against the forces of universal anarchy, it was necessary that Shakespeare be of

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Dover Wilson's mind on all scores. When Shakespeare seems to him to be behaving in an un-English manner—say, in the gorily histrionic tragedy, *Titus Andronicus*—Dover Wilson declares the play to be not Shakespeare's, and a joke. As Boswell said of Dr. Johnson's conversation, if his pistol didn't fire, he hit you over the head with it.

Dover Wilson's analysis of *Julius Caesar* is an example of the chaos that can result from investing too much in another man's like-mindedness. As an enemy of dictatorship, albeit one who had not yet seen enough to mistrust coups conducted in the name of national liberation, Dover Wilson decided that *Julius Caesar* was a vindication of the assassins. Shakespeare's Caesar, he proclaims, is a loathsome and decrepit tyrant, a mere Jack Cade (the 15th-century peasant celebrated in *Henry VI, Part Two* for raising a rebellion that stormed London, beheading Lord Say and Seal and promising the masses all the beer they could drink and a month of Sundays). The play, he concludes, might better be entitled *Caesar and Caesarism,* for "such is Caesarism . . . with the equality of all in one classless mob united in reverence before a semi-divine being, whether Napoleon, Fuehrer, or General Secretary of the Communist party." Dover Wilson's play sounds like a fine one, but it isn't Shakespeare's. He has gone as far wrong as only a vision can lead one.

And yet because the vigor and almost desperate conviction of Dover Wilson's prose are everywhere accompanied by a luminously sunny temper and a boundless spirit of optimism and adventure, he remains one of the most salutary critics of our time. He is at his soundest in *Henry V,* in which the historical parallels do not require so much straining.

Henry V is the fourth and last of an immensely popular tetralogy that Shakespeare wrote in the late 1590's. The sequence chronicles the overthrow of the unstable and effeminate Richard II by Bolingbroke, who as king in *Henry IV, Parts One and Two* enjoys a troubled reign over a country plagued by debts and insurrections. The *Henry IV* plays are best remembered for the pranks of Henry's wayward son, Prince Hal, and his ancient and disreputable sidekick, Falstaff. In *Henry V* the king Prince Hal has become is an ideal Christian ruler and a great popular hero, just, austere, pious, warlike, who raises England from demoralization and anarchy to civil order, and instills in his people a spirit of abiding nationalism. The play centers around Henry's invasion of France to recover lands rightfully his and the miraculous victory at Agincourt over an enemy far outnumbering his small and bedraggled army.

Dover Wilson's introduction to *Henry V,* written in 1947 and dedicated to "Field Marshal the Viscount Wavell, 'Star of England' in her darkest hour," is a paean to England and its heroes. It is also, like all Dover Wilson's finest writing, a story of blinding personal conversion. Raised by his elders to despise *Henry V* as a tinny concession to popular taste, a drum-and-trumpet affair, Dover Wilson had seen a production of the play in the fall of 1914, when the nation was mobilizing for its first world war, and this had revealed to him how rousingly Shakespeare had captured an enduring national mood. One war later, the parallels seem even closer: Henry V and Churchill "come from the same national mint," while the French in Shakespeare's play at times seem "extraordinarily like Mussolini."

But Dover Wilson's peculiar talent here is not for finding historical likenesses but for cutting through the cant that has surrounded *Henry V* since 1817, when Hazlitt, "in a fit of republican and anti-patriotic spleen," called the king a brute and a hypocrite. Swinburne and Yeats followed suit, and modern critics had also joined forces in denouncing Henry's mission in France as mass murder on a patently trumped-up pretext. The only dispute was over whether Shakespeare had intended to endorse this 15th-century atrocity or, as some critics supposed, to offer an ironic exposé of war's "brilliant surface and the horrors that lie beneath." To such oversophisticated gooses, Dover Wilson responds patiently, "The war against France is a righteous war, and seemed as much so to Shakespeare's public as the war against the Nazis seems to us." In rebutting the charges of imperialist aggression, moreover, Dover Wilson comes to the very heart of the play, a heart so simple that no critic before or since has spied it: *Henry V*'s glory lies not merely in the winning of a resounding victory but in "the defense of a narrow place against the odds," in the bravery and fortitude of a wretched few overcoming many, a theme Dover Wilson takes back to the Anglo-Saxon Battle of Maldon.

As THE contrasting examples of *Julius Caesar* and *Henry V* suggest, Dover Wilson can be wrong, and sometimes horribly wrong, yet on the whole the reader is better off with him wrong than with many of Shakespeare's editors right, for even at his worst he seems to be holding Shakespeare's heart in the palm of his hand. The Shakespeare Dover Wilson gives us is everything that Shakespeare has ever seemed to be: a loyal subject, a patriot, a lover of life, a defender of authority, a skirt-chaser, and a hero-worshipper.

It should be added, though, that Dover Wilson's vision of Shakespeare in his edition rests on still another assumption which by the time of the rival Arden edition had come to be increasingly discredited: that Shakespeare was God's idiot, a natural genius who "knew" everything without ever having picked up a book. This long-lived myth, created with the kindest intentions by Ben Jonson, was only reluctantly abandoned, largely thanks to the efforts of T.W. Baldwin whose

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1,500-page work, *Shakspere's Small Latine and Lesse Greeke* (1944), showed just what was entailed in a Tudor grammar-school education, and how profoundly Shakespeare profited from it.

Unfortunately, once critics recognized Shakespeare as an able scholar who drew his inspiration from Seneca, Ovid, and Euripides, they foisted on him a second-rate academic mentality into the bargain, and have since infested his plays with all the murky and tortuous ambiguities and self-divided irony that seem to modern eyes the essential properties of a civilized mind. Hand in hand with Shakespeare's putative illiteracy had gone his clarity, his love of the ordinary and natural, and his great good humor. Now he became a secret but scathing critic of the very world he once seemed to be celebrating, and dramas that had given audiences pleasure as comedies were relegated to the dark realm of the "problem plays."

Some of this development can be seen already in the New Arden edition, begun in 1946, the postwar product of a world in which everything seemed to have been cast into doubt, a world (as Una Ellis-Fermor, the general editor of the Arden, put it) of "chaos, of disjunction, of ultimate formlessness, of negation." Its voice, in contrast to Dover Wilson's ringing affirmations in the New Shakespeare, is the small cautious voice of those who have come back from hell, and who recognize in Shakespeare a fellow-traveler.

To Una Ellis-Fermor, Shakespeare's final value rests in his salutary comprehension of evil. "Whenever actual experience threatens to pass endurance, there is a measure of alleviation in discovering that it has already been met and recorded," she wrote in 1945 in *The Frontiers of Drama*. "The facts are not softened, but the sense of isolation which gives the facts a main part of their horror is mitigated." In Shakespeare, "actual experience has not only been met, but resolved into form by the grandest of all human faculties, the artistic imagination." This resolution, central to Shakespeare's work, amounts to a kind of paradoxical dualism: "The content of his thought is an implacable assertion of chaos as the ultimate fact of being; the presence of artistic form is a deeper unconscious testimony to an order against which the gates of hell shall not prevail."

Doubt, and a first-hand acquaintance with the worst, are the premises on which the New Arden is founded. Doubt, indeed, infects the stability of the text itself. Whereas in 1921 the editors of the New Shakespeare, full of faith in progress and enthusiasm for scholarly advances, felt confident in promising their readers an unprecedentedly authoritative edition, a pearl without flaw, twenty-five years later the New Arden tenders no such claims. As Una Ellis-Fermor states in the general introduction to the series, all that has been learned has led not to certainty but rather "into wholesome and chastened uncertainty." The old Shakespeare has been discredited, but a new not yet risen from its ashes.

What kind of monument could be expected to rise from such scorched earth? As it happens, a considerable one. Whereas earlier editions were undertaken and dominated by one man (usually with a dummy partner) who, if he occasionally farmed out a play, still demanded that the sub-editor conform to his opinions, the New Arden set the precedent for a whole generation by making each play an autonomous republic governed by an editor with sole responsibility for its condition. Miss Ellis-Fermor promised by this abdication of central authority a more complicated and erratic edition than those of the past. In fact, however, over the last forty years the New Arden Shakespeare has been of an unusually uniform consistency, characterized by clarity of outline, by common sense and moderation, by the unobtrusiveness of the editorial voice, and by a high level of scholarship.

THE New Arden's greatest contribution to Shakespeare studies has been its insistence on historical context and its emphasis on tradition—those inherited sympathies, assumptions, and habits of learning which Shakespeare took for granted and on which he built. The New Arden was the first, too, to provide readers with those most essential delights, an appendix to each play reprinting its probable sources (whether Plutarch's *Life of Mark Anthony* or Holinshed's *Chronicles*) and a thorough index of cross-references. Thus when Shakespeare in *Titus Andronicus* speaks of diving into "the burning lake"—a confusion of Hades's burning river Phlegethon—the editor, J.C. Maxwell, not only locates the probable source but refers to similar misusages in Marlowe's *Doctor Faustus*, Kyd's *The Spanish Tragedy*, and Shakespeare's own *Henry VI, Part Two*. Only by understanding what Shakespeare drew from the popular imagination and shared with his contemporaries, the Arden is saying, can we understand his innovations. It is primarily as a Tudor genius and a purveyor of deeply moving and splendidly realized commonplaces—including the peculiarly Elizabethan taste for speculation about the nature of evil—that the Arden presents the playwright.*

For all its undoubted gains, however, the Arden edition also loses something that was central to Dover Wilson's understanding of the plays: their dramatic effect upon an audience. Kenneth Muir, a veteran Shakespeare scholar and an editor of both the Arden's *King Lear* and *Macbeth* and the new Oxford's *Troilus and Cressida*, once wrote of a well-known colleague that "with all his critical insight, [he] missed something in his ideal theater of the mind that his valet might have got in the

* The most influential contemporary proponent of this view, and indeed the greatest Shakespearean commentator alive today, is the Oxford scholar, Emrys Jones, whose *Origins of Shakespeare* is a testimony both to the playwright's learning and to his orthodoxy.

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gallery of the Lyceum Theater." Something of the same feeling arises from reading the Arden introductions.

In the Arden edition of *Henry V* (1955), for example, J.H. Walter delineates the Renaissance ideal of a Christian prince, with ample illustrations from Erasmus and Chelidonius, and throws at our heads Donne, Hooker, and Bernard of Clairvaux in order to prove that when the bishops say that "Consideration like an angel came/And whipp'd th'offending Adam" out of Henry, the word "consideration" signifies what happened to Paul on the road to Damascus. Walter here recognizes something important: that *Henry V* is an intensely religious play, perhaps Shakespeare's most religious, and that the key to Henry is his conversion and his own sense of his relation to God. It is a subject no other critic has properly addressed (since Shakespeare, an Anglican, was here writing about the Roman Catholic Church, many historians have supposed *Henry V* to be an *anti*-religious play). And yet, by the end of this learned and perceptive introduction, one has no sense of having read about a dramatic spectacle, a piece of theater; little sense, even, that the work is written largely in verse. For all Walter's scholarship and insight, the reader knows less than Dover Wilson knew when he saw *Henry V* on the stage as the British nation was preparing for war.

WHATEVER else they may accomplish or fail to accomplish, the two most recent editions of Shakespeare, the Oxford and the New Cambridge, do hasten the transition to a more dramatic conception of the plays.

The Oxford Shakespeare, under the general editorship of Stanley Wells,* an academic with strong ties to the Royal Shakespeare Company, is perhaps the more aggressive in its theatricality. Its introductions and commentaries revolve around staging, complete with new and amended stage directions; the staff boasts a distinguished American musical adviser whose findings on early settings are here reproduced; and in one play, the editor even goes so far as to include an appendix listing the possible allocation of roles among the members of a company. In some ways, indeed, this edition—which so far has issued five plays and has announced twelve more in preparation—seems to have been designed more for the use of highbrow directors than for students and the common reader.

But the Oxford Shakespeare's happiest and most significant contribution lies in its new conception of the texts themselves, a conception which amounts to an entire revision of our understanding of how Shakespeare worked.

Shakespeare's plays have come down to us in scattered folios and quartos.† Usually there are one basic folio and one basic quarto version of a play, sometimes exhibiting as many as 5,000 variations from one to the other, in addition to the comprehensive but no more reliable First Folio of the *Complete Works*, which was collected and published by Shakespeare's friends in 1623.

All these texts bear an uneasy relation to the plays Shakespeare wrote—they are mangled, adulterated, corrupt—but the nod has traditionally gone to those editions which were believed to have been transcribed from Shakespeare's own "foul papers" (his rough drafts). For the most part these were folios, which, though cut and garbled by hasty or overambitious scribes, were nonetheless considered to be as authoritative copies as we were likely to get. There is a large group of quartos, on the other hand, which were long deemed to be irremediably "bad": each mysterious in provenance and ambiguously corrupt, sometimes spouting gibberish, sometimes much finer verse than the folio version. At one time these "bad" quartos were thought to be fossils of earlier plays by other dramatists which Shakespeare had later rewritten in folio.

In the early years of this century, Dover Wilson's mentors, Greg, Pollard, and McKerrow, developed (independently of one another) the then-revolutionary theory of memorial reconstruction. The bad quartos, far from being mere precursors of more advanced Shakespearean versions, were now seen to represent the misrememberings of actors trying to reconstruct the Shakespeare play itself for a new company. Often the editor could even pin down the role in the play which the reconstructing actor had played.

Until the new Oxford edition this theory was not fully worked out; the memorial reconstructions continued to be thought unreliable, and most editors stuck with the "foul papers" as the stabler texts. Now, however, the Oxford Shakespeare has followed the theory of memorial reconstruction to its logical and beautifully inevitable conclusion.

As Shakespeare's play was being rehearsed and performed during a season's run—the reasoning goes—he would naturally have reworked it from his rough draft. The "bad" quartos, therefore, with their cuts and additions, embody actors' reconstructions of *later* and more authoritative texts than the folios. In other words, the "corruptions," although sometimes truly corrupt (an actor filling out a line), may sometimes actually represent Shakespeare's own considered revisions. It is a sign of the supreme confidence of the Oxford Shakespeare's editorial staff that they have no qualms in deciding which variations are actors' guesses, which a typesetter's "improvements," and

* The volumes published so far are: *The Taming of the Shrew*, edited by H.J. Oliver, 248 pp., $19.95, $6.95 paper; *Henry V*, edited by Gary Taylor, 330 pp., $19.95, $6.95 paper; *Troilus and Cressida*, edited by Kenneth Muir, 205 pp., $19.95, $6.95 paper; *Titus Andronicus*, edited by Eugene Waith, 226 pp., $19.95, $7.95 paper; *Julius Caesar*, edited by Arthur Humphreys, 253 pp., $19.95, $6.95 paper.

† Folios, literally, are books whose sheets have been folded once, to form four pages; quartos have been folded twice to make eight.

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which Shakespeare's own second thoughts (for better or worse).

This freedom with the text, which for the most part seems justified, nevertheless can bring some surprising changes. Anyone, for instance, with fond memories of the Dauphin in *Henry V* who writes sonnets to his horse will be startled to find that the part has been given to Bourbon. At this year's Shakespeare Conference, Gary Taylor, a Midwesterner transplanted to England and the Oxford's associate editor and its most radical purist, announced that henceforth Falstaff was to be known as Oldcastle (Shakespeare's original name for him). Similarly, Ancient Pistol appears in the Oxford *Henry V*, edited by Taylor, as "Ensign Pistol." (As Nigel Alexander has pointed out in a review in the London *Times Literary Supplement*, this last change makes a false distinction between two ranks which probably at the time were conflated, obliterating in the process the run of sexual puns throughout *Henry IV, Parts One and Two* on which Pistol's character is founded.) At times, indeed, the editorial committee's regard for what it believes Shakespeare intended, and its disregard for tradition, leads to a delusion: that by purging the text of inherited interpretations, one can reach a purer source without polluting it with one's own modernisms.*

GARY TAYLOR'S *Henry V* is the best example of the benefits and liabilities of the Oxford Shakespeare.

Henry V, as we have seen, is a play about courage against the odds and about war in both its glorious conception and its grueling execution. So persuasive is the play's shining rhetoric that it makes one wish to have been there on St. Crispin's Day, and it is an indication of the enduring power of Henry's words before Agincourt that Churchill should have echoed them after another of England's greatest trials, the Battle of Britain: "We few, we happy few, we band of brothers. . . ." As Dover Wilson wrote, the war against France is a righteous war. This is hardly to say that Shakespeare was uninterested in its full range of consequences; to the contrary, the play shows how, when a nation is at war, vineyards go untended and children unschooled, soldiers die unshriven, and old men and boys at home are jealous. But when the common soldier Williams suggests to the disguised Henry that the king must foot the bill for any malfeasances that come of this war, and answer for all the severed arms and legs at Judgment Day, Shakespeare comes down clearly on the side of individual responsibility, drawing the boundaries that define an ordinary man's life: "Every subject's duty is his king's, but every subject's soul is his own."

For its military enthusiasm and its defense of authority *Henry V* quite understandably excited anti-imperialist and pacifist attention for almost two hundred years. But it was not until 1945 that some trendy genius decided Shakespeare really intended the play as a secret indictment of militarism. Gary Taylor's interpretation of *Henry V* is a refinement of this now-popular position. In keeping with current critical sensibilities, he sees irony under every bed, even when ostensibly excluding the possibility of it—as when he informs us solemnly that the play's full title, *The Famous Victories of Henry V*, "contains not the dwarf of a hint of irony or disapprobation," though it "could hardly be anything but ironic in a serious modern play (like Samuel Beckett's *Happy Days* . . .)." His *Henry V* is a deeply ambiguous and self-divided piece of work, a play whose hero is deliberately made repellent and his cause unjust.

To prove this reading, Taylor invents a crucial stage direction. When Henry hears that the French have reinforced their men and are launching another attack, he orders that his soldiers kill their prisoners of war, so that the English will not be overwhelmed in the fight to come. Gary Taylor, doing something no editor has done in 380 years, inserts a stage direction indicating that the prisoners' throats be slit on stage. This is an innovation not borne out by the text, but it exposes what he feels to be Shakespeare's true meaning, that "the key to this victory is Henry's cold-blooded murder of the defenseless French prisoners." Only a man capable of "killing" Falstaff (a/k/a Oldcastle) with coldness, he continues, could have been capable of this slaughter of the innocents, "and only a man capable of both could have become the hero-king of Agincourt."

There are serious problems with this interpolation. Henry's order is followed immediately by the scene in which we hear that the French, far from attacking the English army head-on, have raided their camps, stolen their luggage, and killed the truly defenseless little boys guarding it. The news raises a storm of indignation and

* Throughout the Oxford edition, the reader will find many unfamiliar words and phrases. Some of the changes are in favor of simple modernization. In *Troilus and Cressida*, where once Troilus feared that sexual consummation would bring with it "sounding destruction," we now find "swooning destruction," and in *Henry V*, the "scambling and unquiet time" of Henry IV's reign has become "scrambling." Some are editorial emendations, such as every generation of editors has supplied to make sense of textual cruces or snares. Gary Taylor takes Henry V's promise further to atone for his father's sins—"More will I do/though all that I can do is nothing worth/since that my penitence comes after all/imploring pardon"—and turns it to the more limited but precise "comes after ill." Some changes occur when either previously neglected versions are substituted for the standard text or a new scene is constructed from the strands of several variants. In *Henry V*, Act 4, Scene 5 (the scene in which the seemingly defeated French rally their forces for another attack), Gary Taylor, in order to make consistent his substitution of Bourbon for the Dauphin, pieces together his own version of the scene, taking a line from the folio, a line from the quarto, and emending them to his satisfaction, cutting in the process some of the more memorable phrases of each—for instance, the Dauphin's eloquent summing up of the English army's transformation from drowned rats to men of iron, "Be these the wretches that we played at dice for?"

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creates a decisive turning point in the battle. This climax would be altogether quashed if twenty Frenchmen had just had their throats cut before our eyes. Such disregard for the play Shakespeare wrote suggests some of the dangers inherent in the Oxford's enlarged vision of an editor's duties and liberties. In this case, the innovation results in a violation of the play's inner logic for the sake of a political point peculiar to the editor and the fashions of his time.

A VIOLATION of another kind occurs in Taylor's handling of the context in which *Henry V* was written. It is one of the unfortunate unevennesses of critical development that even as our historical awareness has deepened—and the editors of the Oxford Shakespeare are for the most part discerning in their remembrance of where Tudor sympathies and interests lay—some critics today like to place Shakespeare in proper historical context only to remove him from it, usually to make him a kind of dissident in Elizabethan society. This habit is nowhere so apparent as in Gary Taylor's treatment of the circumstances which inspired *Henry V* and his interpretation of how Shakespeare reacted to them.

Henry V, Taylor writes, came into being in "a period of great national enthusiasm for an expansionist military adventure"—this was the putting down of the Irish rebellion of 1599, an event to which Shakespeare actually refers in *Henry V* and which roused in the English people a wave of "self-righteous indignation and chauvinistic pride." Dismissing as "biographical fantasies" Dover Wilson's assumption that Shakespeare, like the rest of the nation, was proud of the young and popular general (Essex) who led the action, Taylor concludes: "How Shakespeare himself regarded what seems to us now a rather unseemly and ridiculous fervor we have only the play itself to tell us." As we have seen, Taylor has ways of making a play talk. What we must conclude from *his* evidence is that Shakespeare wrote *Henry V* in order to cash in on a popular sentiment he himself looked down upon, and that this superficial and insincere pandering to patriotism in fact disguises a moral hatchet job on the victory which it appears to celebrate. In other words, the Shakespeare of *Henry V* is a cynical hypocrite and a closet dissenter.

Taylor argues his case for an antiwar reading of the play on interesting grounds. Although *Henry V*, as a sequel to the immensely popular *Henry IV, Parts One and Two*, ought to have been a blockbuster, in fact it went through fewer printings than might have been expected and few contemporary allusions to it survive. To this day, revivals of *Henry V* generally coincide with the threat of war and times of national crisis, but to meet the demand for a patriotic rouser, Taylor maintains, directors have been obliged to crop severely the play Shakespeare wrote for just such occasions. "When patriotism wants a play," *Henry V* is found "insufficiently simple and unnecessarily disturbing."

Several objections can be entered here. Contrary to Taylor's suggestion, *Henry V* has always been a great crowd pleaser. As anyone will attest who has seen on stage Henry's courtship of the French Kate, it plays a good deal better than it reads. Although wartime stagings are obviously more memorable, *Henry V* has probably gone through more productions since 1945 than at any time since it was written. Nor should it come as a surprise that, in the interests of mobilizing a nation for war, the play needs a little pruning; for it is Shakespeare's peculiar gift to argue compellingly every side of the question. Because we feel for a Macbeth or even a Richard III, however, does not mean that Shakespeare condones regicide, nor because he shows us the resentment of soldiers at having to fight, and describes war's ill effects on the countryside, that he thinks war a sham. There is no kind of moral relativism in *Henry V*. That "the war against France is a righteous war" is confirmed by its outcome, as befits the providential vision of history Shakespeare inherited and made use of. Who can doubt the justice of Henry's mission when we hear that 10,000 Frenchmen and only 29 Englishmen have died at Agincourt, and Henry, stunned, says very low, "O God, Thy arm was here/And not to us, but to Thy arm alone/Ascribe we all"?

There may be social orders which make dissidence the only way of living honorably and freely; others make protest arid, cranky, and irrelevant. Elizabethan England, for whatever reasons, was of the latter kind: the "dissidence" of a Christopher Marlowe (as in his vaunted belief that religion was only a tool to keep men in awe) is part of what renders his writing empty though magnificent. To make Shakespeare, too, a secret scoffer, to alienate him from the pride and confidence his nation enjoyed, and to read his plays as merely ironic, is to diminish their greatness, which is the greatness of affirmation.

None of this is intended to suggest that Gary Taylor's *Henry V* is without value. The introduction, though in many ways skewed, contains some useful insights, his footnotes are helpful, and his way with Shakespeare's language scrupulous: he delivers fully on his promise to recover the feel of a word, "its social and literary register, the cluster of uses or occasions of use," even going so far as to say what a word does *not* mean. (The reader who uses the Oxford edition, however, should be sure to consult all the collations at the bottom of the page, where a little "not in Q, F" indicates that the editor is pulling a fast one in the name of textual purity.) Nevertheless, for all Taylor's hard work and keen intelligence, the reader is still better off with Dover Wilson's edition, which lets lie many interesting textual possibilities, but grasps more surely what Shakespeare was doing.

Something similar can be said of the Oxford

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Shakespeare as a whole.* We must be grateful for its new theory of authorial revision, which has finally dispelled the illusion (again instilled by Ben Jonson) that Shakespeare never crossed out a word: an illusion which led scholars to ignore versions of the plays which are clearly Shakespeare's own considered improvements. But while the Oxford editors should be commended for their rigorous and discerning scholarship, at times their choice of variants fails to confine itself to local interpretation and seeks to impose a clearly foreign meaning on the text. In such cases the Oxford version comes to have the look of a brutal restoration which, in stripping an ancient canvas of the accretions of the ages, imparts a falsely modern cast to the scene.

THE New Cambridge Shakespeare, an update of Dover Wilson which is being issued under the general editorship of Philip Brockbank (a veteran Shakespeare scholar who edited the Arden *Coriolanus*), offers a more traditional perception of Shakespeare. The Oxford volumes tend to be confusing and muddled in their organization of evidence and interpretation; the New Cambridge, by contrast, has recovered the lucid order of the Arden, in which dates, editions, textual conflicts, sources, and critical reception are laid out like laundry on the line. The New Cambridge has recovered, too, the Arden's illuminating common sense, its orthodoxy, its respect for tradition and historicity.

In keeping with current trends, the New Cambridge also offers that essential addition, a sense of theater, surpassing even the Oxford in the fullness of its treatment of theatrical history. It is in fact only quite recently that Shakespeare's editors have acknowledged the importance of stage histories, although there are few more revealing conduits to a play than an account of how directors past and present have seen fit to mount it, and few more direct tunnels to the heart of a nation and an age than what they choose to see on stage and how. It says much, for instance, that *Troilus and Cressida,* Shakespeare's version of the Fall of Troy, and a "tragedy of treachery and lechery," went virtually unperformed for three hundred years, only to become the rage in Germany and Central Europe in the years following World War I, going through nineteen productions, mostly transvestite, in Essen, Leipzig, Budapest, Vienna, and Prague. The New Cambridge Shakespeare's stage histories, thus far, appear to be both comprehensive and extremely perceptive.

Only three plays have yet been published in the New Cambridge edition: Norman Sanders's superb *Othello,* a rather dull *Romeo and Juliet* edited by G. Blakemore Evans, and Ann Thompson's *The Taming of the Shrew.*† Since *The Taming of the Shrew* is the only play both the Oxford and the New Cambridge thus far have in common, we may close with a comparison of the two editions.

As everyone knows, the play involves a rough and quirky adventurer, Petruchio, who in his determination to marry both rich and happily, sets out to "tame" Katherine, the beautiful but foul-tempered daughter of a merchant. The main plot describes the grueling and outlandishly perverse trials by which Petruchio astonishes the girl into loving compliance. At the finale, the reformed shrew not only wins Petruchio's wager on her obedience, but lectures the assembled wives on a woman's duties to her husband.

What *Henry V* has done, historically, for disputes over foreign policy, *The Taming of the Shrew* has effected on the domestic front: it has raised a furor. Ann Thompson, whose New Cambridge edition of the play is all one could wish for, perceptively reveals how it has unleashed the social debates of every age: how the Left first railed against it—it made George Bernard Shaw ashamed to be a man—and then adopted it (rather as Women Against Pornography have adopted *Hustler*'s centerfolds), how liberals have wriggled in their seats and protested too much, and conservatives have taken to the play like a hot toddy in a cold climate.

If the meanings imposed upon *The Taming of the Shrew* have been many, Dr. Thompson is unusual in her candor and clear-sightedness about the play's true bearing. Though she herself is a feminist who tells us in a postscript of her own problems with the play's "overt endorsement of patriarchy," she resists the temptation to have Shakespeare share her own discomfort by making him into a closet radical, as recent critics have done. Instead, she accepts that Shakespeare was "rather more comfortable in that world [of male supremacy] than we might like him to have been," and leaves it at that. Still rarer is her understanding of the taming itself, a subject which has proved either a blind spot or a red flag to most critics and reviewers, the Oxford editor included, although audiences seem to enjoy it.

Dr. Thompson recognizes what other critics have denied: that Petruchio's victory lies not in breaking the spirit of a headstrong girl—for Katherine, even as a shrew, is adorable—but in turning a bitterly envious creature bent on thwarting herself and humiliating others into a generous and loving wife with a playful wit and a stern sense of duty. Far from "deforming" her character, as feminist readings would have it, Petruchio has freed what one might call her creative powers; the at-once ideal and natural relations between man and wife which Kate describes in

* Space does not permit a consideration of all the Oxford volumes that have so far come out, but I would like to single out Kenneth Muir's *Troilus and Cressida.* His brilliantly imaginative and just introduction restores health and balance to a play in which critics before him have seen only cynicism and dissolution.

† *Othello,* 209 pp., $29.95, $6.95 paper; *Romeo and Juliet,* 249 pp., $29.95, $6.95 paper; *The Taming of the Shrew,* 190 pp., $29.95, $6.95 paper.

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the closing scene are not the bonds of slavery but a civil contract in which each partner loves and serves the other.

As Dr. Thompson realizes, the play's credibility depends on our conviction that, at the end, Petruchio and Katherine have an extremely happy and rewarding marriage ahead of them. By stark contrast, H.J. Oliver, the editor of Oxford's *The Taming of the Shrew*, sees a play in which everyone gets a raw deal. Petruchio's victory, "if it is a victory, is a very poor one indeed," he writes, and Kate "loses in every sense that matters."

How can such a divergence between two readers' impressions be explained? I suspect the answer is that most modern critics, repelled by the idea that obedience and self-fulfillment might be one and the same thing, simply find it easier to remake the brilliant and lively girl of the last act into a zombie or a liar. Oliver conforms to this modern orthodoxy; Dr. Thompson, whatever her own feelings, declines to foist it on Shakespeare.

On the other hand, Oliver's way with the text is more persuasive than Dr. Thompson's. He adopts the Oxford Shakespeare's theory of authorial revision to solve with wonderful neatness the textual problems that have beset the play: a quarto full of nonsense and misremembered plagiarisms, a folio that omits the quarto's larger superstructure. Earlier editors supposed the folio to be Shakespeare's rewrite of an inferior dramatist's quarto; Oliver instead posits the notion that the quarto is an actor's memorial reconstruction of the folio, containing Shakespeare's later additions to the play, an actor's stumblings, and a hired editor's filling-in of his gaps with large chunks of Marlowe's *Tamburlaine*. Ann Thompson, whose edition of the play came out right after the Oxford, cites Oliver's theory, but seems to have felt shy about using it. If so, she should have overcome her scruples: in textual matters, comprehensiveness and accuracy count for more than originality.

In general, the editors of the New Cambridge Shakespeare seem leery of the enlarged editorial powers the theory of authorial revision bears with it, of its mandate to construct a radically new text from knotted and conflicting versions of the plays and to call one's handiwork Shakespeare's. And it is true that the Oxford Shakespeare at times exploits its editorial prerogative in order to force otherwise unwarranted interpretations upon the plays. But the New Cambridge edition makes insufficient use of the sound and illuminating theory from which these editorial abuses proceed, and thus risks rendering its scholarship prematurely dated.

THERE is one last thought which the appearance of these distinguished new volumes raises. Some people question, with justice, the need for so many heavy, expensive, and drastically "new" Shakespeares as the last ten years have brought us. In England, you can buy the *Complete Works* in one plastic-bound volume, like the Bible, for about the price of a pair of socks. The implication is worth considering. Shakespeare should always be with us; should we not, then, simply roll all our strength and all our sweetness up into one ball and retire with the one-volume, cut-and-dried Shakespeare that George Lyman Kittredge edited for Ginn and on which Americans of the 40's and 50's were raised? Do we really need these twenty- and thirty-dollar-apiece poppets, all dolled up with musical settings and textual griefs?

The answer is yes. It is not that we have got stupider than our grandfathers, as is presupposed by this year's announcement of a Shakespeare "translated" into modern English by the eminent Elizabethan scholar A.L. Rowse—a project that proposes to do for English speakers what bilingual education would do for Hispanics, namely, immure them in costly quarantine from a culture that should be common to all. It is rather that we have progressed so far. The steady advances in scholarship that each quarter-century brings have meant that today, out of the corrupt and adulterated mincemeat of the folios and quartos which have come down to us, we have at least the possibility of receiving a clearer idea of the *Julius Caesar* or *Romeo and Juliet* Shakespeare wished to see performed than did an editor thirty or three hundred years ago.

The fact that with such advances come abundant new temptations, and specifically the temptation to use our freedom of textual choice to impose a more narrow and sectarian interpretation on the plays, is an argument not for scholarly obscurantism but for historical and literary humility. When it comes to determining Shakespeare's meaning, no scholarly methods have proved as objective as Shakespeare himself.

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From Maoism to the Talmud

(With Sartre Along the Way)

An Interview With Benny Levy

Stuart L. Charmé

IN 1970, Jean-Paul Sartre, who throughout his life had been preoccupied with finding a balance between intellectual activity and political involvement, met Pierre Victor, a young radical Maoist and follower of the brand of Marxism-Leninism preached by the Communist philosopher Louis Althusser. Victor, one of the leaders of the *Gauche prolétarienne*, a Maoist group active in the upheavals in Paris in 1968, had come to Sartre to ask him to take over the editorship of the radical newspaper *La Cause du Peuple*, to insure that the government would no longer try to harass or suppress it. Sartre accepted, and in the years that followed, Victor became one of his closest friends, someone who represented for Sartre the ideal combination of rigorous intellectual thought and militant political action. Simone de Beauvoir, in her memoir *Adieux: A Farewell to Sartre*, quotes Sartre as saying, "I should like Pierre Victor to accomplish the work he wants to do, a work that is both that of an intellectual and a militant. Of all the people I have known, he is the only one who gives me full satisfaction from that point of view." Indeed, Sartre saw Victor as a youthful continuator of his own work.

In the mid-70's, however, Pierre Victor underwent a radical intellectual conversion. Reverting to his original Jewish name, Benny Levy, he abandoned the extreme Left and devoted himself to an intensive study of the Talmud. As Levy deepened his knowledge of Jewish texts, he shared his new insights with Sartre, who expressed an interest in certain Jewish ideas, though his grasp of them was rather superficial. Shortly before his death in 1980, in an interview with Levy, Sartre mentioned his appreciation of the Jewish views of man and history. This interview caused something of a scandal in Sartre's old circle. In her memoirs Simone de Beauvoir expresses her own horror at the interview, and her conviction that Levy had manipulated Sartre into saying things he did not believe. In his physically weakened state, says Beauvoir, Sartre simply gave in to the influence of Levy—and of Sartre's own adopted Algerian Jewish daughter, Arlette. But of course there are many who dispute Beauvoir's version of these matters, including both Benny Levy and Arlette El-Kaim Sartre themselves.

In December 1983 I met with Benny Levy at his house in the suburbs of Paris. I was very curious about the path that led him from a deep commitment to radical politics to a total absorption in the world of the rabbis, a journey which he had tried to share, ironically enough, with the major figure of atheistic existentialism of the 20th century. I arrived at Levy's house on the first night of Hanukkah. He greeted me at the door wearing a yarmulke and led me into a small room where he and his family had just lit oil lamps and were finishing off a traditional dish of potato pancakes. On the bookshelves behind him I saw the volumes of the Talmud. What follows are excerpts from our discussion.

Interviewer: Recently, we have been hearing about a Jewish renewal in France. Do you think the immigration of thousands of Sephardi Jews from North Africa is a major cause of this change, since they tend to be more observant, traditional, and Zionist than French Jews were previously?

Levy: It would be bad for me to give a sociological response to a question which has a more essential meaning for me. In my opinion, the only answer of interest involves looking at what happened to us, without any pretense of sociological analysis. By "us," I mean those people who participated actively in the generation of '68. I mean those of us who prepared for '68, who continued '68, and who ultimately reached the low point of '68. As a result of the events of 1968 we reached the bottom of leftist thinking and of the extreme Left in general. It is this phenomenon which has

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the greatest significance, regardless of what sociology may say.

I can also tell you that beyond the group of people whom I knew directly and who, like me, began a reorientation toward Jewish texts, the same phenomenon occurred in Strasbourg, an important city for French Judaism. People from the generation of the New Left, and from elsewhere, gathered around a yeshiva to retrieve the study of Talmud in their own way.

I do have a friend, Shmuel Trigano, who has written books about the Sephardi element and strongly insists on this as the main factor in the renewal of Judaism in France.* And, sure, the most obvious sociological data point in that direction. It's clear that the arrival of a mass of Jews from North Africa who were attached to certain traditions like kashrut led to the multiplication of kosher butchers. In addition, you can see the changes in the power relations within Jewish institutions that resulted from the arrival of the North African Jews. It is no accident that the Chief Rabbi today is a Sephardi. It is also no accident that a certain mode of kashrut is common today, linked to the customs of North African Jews who are attached to kashrut for sentimental reasons rather than strictly as a matter of following Halakhah and *mitzvot*, the Law and the Commandments. You can describe a pile of traits like this, where you can see the weight of the Sephardim. There's no doubt that the sheer mass of the Sephardi Jews has contributed to the renewal of interest in Judaism.

Here in my own house, my wife is Ashkenazi, whereas I suppose I am Sephardi since I am from Egypt. But there is such a particularity about Egyptian Judaism itself (which was in its final hour when I was born) that one would have to register all kinds of nuances for it to become interesting. My wife has followed a different course and has suffered profoundly different afflictions, having had part of her family massacred. The decisive events have been different for the Ashkenazim and the Sephardim.

But these are all external considerations, and things should be seen from a more internal perspective. If you want to talk about the renewal of interest in Judaism, you have to talk about the renewal of interest in the text. There is a renewal of Judaism only when the letter begins to live again. To be a Jew is to lead an existence in relation to the Torah. That's the first thing to consider. All the rest is external, superficial, and secondary. Of course, you can talk about the fact that a part of the Jewish world has lost all contact with the Torah as a result of assimilation. But then you are no longer talking about the renewal of Judaism in an internal sense.

Interviewer: In *Adieux,* Simone de Beauvoir writes that like many radical leftists who had once condemned religion, you gradually became "spiritualistic and even religious." To what do you attribute the renewal of your own interest in Judaism? Is the fact of being Jewish important to you primarily as a religious matter or as a matter of ethnic identity?

Levy: As for what Simone de Beauvoir says, it would have been better for her to have said nothing than such stupidities. When she wrote the lines you cite, I was only at the beginning of my interest in Jewish texts, and speaking about it to Sartre every day. She believed she could see in my behavior the things she wrote, but I was still quite far from deriving such emotions from my study. That took several more years. Thus, when she calls me "religious" or "spiritualistic," she is advancing me a great deal. In any case, the mention of the name of God is manifestly unbearable to her, so it's understandable that she drew her revolver in advance. But the interest which I developed in these texts had nothing to do with religion and even less to do with my roots or sense of ethnic identity. My interest in these texts was rigorously metaphysical.

Interviewer: OK, but it's no coincidence that it was *Jewish* texts that interested you.

Levy: In order for me to give you a valid answer to this, I must first tell you that I truly tried everything possible before turning to those texts. It was the period when I was working with Sartre every day on our dialogues [to be called *Pouvoir et Liberté*]. I tried everything within the realm of the Western philosophical tradition, which was the common foundation that Sartre and I had. Sartre and I spoke of all this together. I really tried absolutely everything. (I never concerned myself with Buddhism or other such traditions. They are certainly a high form of knowledge, but one that didn't interest me.)

Recently, I've been finishing a work about these dialogues with Sartre and I've been rereading this record of our path. What strikes me is the extent to which, while working with Sartre, I was still attached to the idea of a common access to the word. The Christian metaphysical schema was extremely strong, extremely tenacious. It's not that we were interested in Christian texts as such, but the texts of Western civilization were themselves steeped in this Christian schema. Take Sartre's own texts, for example, which have spectacularly Christological elements.

Interviewer: Then how is it that you decided to turn to Jewish texts and to learn Hebrew?

* Shmuel Trigano is the author of a number of works concerning the situation of the Jew in the modern world, and especially in France. His books include *La Nouvelle Question Juive: L'Avenir d'un espoir* (1979) and *La République et les juifs après Copernic* (1982).

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Levy: The name of one person is important, a person to whom I must confess my indebtedness, Emmanuel Levinas.* Here is someone who had the very same philosophical training as Sartre, the same roots in phenomenology and humanism. He was someone who was very close to Sartre in his philosophical language, and yet profoundly different, because he had his roots in the Talmud. This was extraordinary to me. I had two great philosophical moments in my life: in my youth it was Sartre, and then Levinas, when I came away from the Left in 1973-75.

Interviewer: Was that the first time you came upon Levinas?

Levy: No, actually I am reminded by Pierre Goldman† that I had discovered Levinas earlier, and with ecstasy. I had completely forgotten. It was before I became totally involved in politics. Goldman and I were good friends in the Latin Quarter when I began my philosophical studies. It seems it was in a preparatory class for the Ecole Normale Supérieure, around that time, that I discovered some texts of Levinas on the Other. I don't know which ones. That probably left a considerable mark on me, very largely without my knowing it. He must have had a subterranean effect on me. I couldn't notice this influence at first because when you're involved in politics, there isn't so much time to talk about the Other. To talk about the masses, that's all right, that comes off better.

When I finally extricated myself from politics, when I got my head above water, when I got back to philosophy in its original purity, I resumed everything, systematically, methodically, with ecstasy and extreme happiness. I turned to the philosophy of Plato on the one hand, and my dialogues with Sartre on the other. After a long series of unfruitful attempts to articulate the questions raised by my political experience, including a rereading with Sartre of all his works—after all that, thanks to encountering the texts of Levinas, I began to suspect that here was something decisive, something which also related to my existential constitution as a Jew.

Interviewer: In addition to your interest in Levinas and Jewish texts for "metaphysical" reasons, I notice that you wear a yarmulke, light Hanukkah lamps, and so forth.

Levy: That's all very recent, and has developed increasingly along the way, mainly in the last year.

Interviewer: Do you consider yourself a *baal teshuvah,* a "returnee" to Judaism?

Levy: In the sense in which the term is often used, I would have to say no, because it is a very distressing phenomenon. I shudder at the thought of the American *baalei teshuvah* in Israel. There are yeshivot of these *baalei teshuvah* that are dens of fanaticism and imbecility. I reject the label in this narrow sociological sense. But if you were to restore the rabbinic meaning, if you understand a *baal teshuvah* to be someone who has taken a path toward the significance of the people Israel in its original sense, then I would say yes, without any doubt.

Interviewer: For a long time it was said that the price of emancipation for French Jews was to keep their Jewishness at home or in the synagogue, while being French in public. Do you think that there is a new pride among French Jews, such that they now participate in the life of the nation as Jews?

Levy: That's a joke! Alas, it may be true. Look what happened a few years ago in the presidential elections. There was more or less of a debate among the Jewish institutions, in the "organized community," as it's called, and a group called *Renouveau Juif* ("Jewish Renewal") was formed as a kind of lobby to exert influence and pressure on the elections and on the Jewish vote. I doubt that it had much effect, but in any case it's a dead end. It is politically misguided, largely the result of a vain, external Zionism. This external Zionism is dying, moribund. You can't really say that Zionism at the present time is a political ideology that is very much alive or prestigious. Can I speak of pride in this context without laughing? It is pride in the sense that Sartre talks about pride in *Anti-Semite and Jew* and *Being and Nothingness.* That is to say, it has about it no Jewish *life,* no Jewish *truth,* no positive relation to existing Jewishly, but lots of bluster and defiant attitudes of the same sort that says, "Black is beautiful!" Now, they are going to say "Jewish is beautiful!" That's a load of crap. It's crap first of all because the French who are not Jewish are rightly going to become fed up with these braggarts.

Interviewer: A while ago there was a demonstration in Paris for Josef Begun and other Soviet Jews who have been imprisoned or denied exit

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* Emmanuel Levinas was born in Lithuania in 1905, the same year as Sartre. He came to France in 1923. Influenced by Martin Buber, Franz Rosenzweig, and Edmund Husserl, his philosophy is notable for combining talmudic and phenomenological perspectives.

† Goldman, a disaffected radical and convicted thief, was the center of a strange affair during the early 70's. Falsely accused and convicted of a double murder, he wrote an autobiography which produced enough of a stir to gain him a new trial and exoneration. He was released, but was later murdered himself. In *Dim Memories of a Polish Jew Born in France* (1977), Goldman writes of Levy: "I had first met this rigorous Marxist-Leninist at a time when he would sob with ecstasy on reading Eluard, Emmanuel Levinas, or the young Marx. . . . He was Jewish, and I had always considered him a Talmudist lost in doctrinal commentaries on Maoist texts."

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visas. I was impressed at the size of the demonstration.

Levy: This concern for Soviet Jews is a positive thing. I know people involved who are very nice, very active. They have a real sensitivity. Look, let's not misunderstand one another. It's certain that there is a positive phenomenon that can be called "pride." But if this bud is to have any possibility of blooming, it will only happen in relation to a great deal of study. The rest will join together around this kernel.

Interviewer: Do you think your point of view on current events—for example, on the issue of the placement of cruise and Pershing missiles in Europe—is rooted in Judaism? Or is politics completely separate from your study of Judaism?

Levy: It is not separated in the sense that the study of Judaism has involved a vast deconstruction of politics for me. I make use of Judaism precisely as a critique of politics. In this sense there is a link between them rather than a separation. But when I speak of a critique of politics, you must understand that it is a critique of the *pretension* of politics, the idea that politics is adequate to respond in terms of the destiny of man. It is this pretension, this arrogance of politics in all its visions, whether the highest forms of German idealism or the more ideological forms of today, that the Jewish texts help me to criticize.

Interviewer: Then it is a "Jewish" critique in which you are engaged. In Judaism there is a long tradition of criticizing the political realm. Is your critique within this tradition?

Levy: You must be careful about what you mean by "tradition." Are we looking at it from an internal point of view or from a sociological or historical point of view? What has triggered and crystallized my interest and rootedness in these texts is the great gesture of the Pharisees toward Rome and its concept of politics. When Jerusalem was in flames, Rabbi Yohanan ben Zakkai asked the Roman general only for permission to rebuild an academy of study at Yavneh. It is in accord with this gesture that I express my critique of politics.

In the Bible one reads that on their way to the Promised Land it was necessary for the children of Israel to pass around the mountain of Seir. The mountain of Seir is in the mountains of Edom, which in rabbinic terminology stands for Rome. "Rome" is our way of speaking of the pretensions of politics in its Western forms, both pagan and Christian. The text thus teaches us why it is necessary to pass around the mountain of Seir, why Jewish life must not entrap itself in politics: that's the snare one must avoid, that is why one must go around the mountain. It is in relation to this gesture of the Pharisees, this lesson of "passing around," that I situate myself.

As for the Euromissiles, it is first necessary that I address a different question, one which does not arise directly out of the threat of nuclear war. It is the question of the relation of Sinai to Western democracy. You must start with this question before worrying about the Euromissiles. In order for me to understand what it means that the nuclear balance favors the Soviets, and that I am in agreement with the position of François Mitterrand, it is first necessary for me to understand the extent to which Israel ("Israel" in the sense of Sinai, not the state of Israel) is bound up with European democracy, or more generally, Western democracy. Insofar as the answer to this question is positive, that is, insofar as Jews are metaphysically interested to the greatest degree in Western democracy, you could say that I take positions from a Jewish point of view. In any case, I'm not taking positions here. It would be very pretentious on my part to speak of the Euromissiles. You must not forget that the wish to beat down the pretensions of politics means also beating down the pretension of each person to have a political opinion about everything. It takes a fair amount of weighing things before one can express oneself with relative competence on strategic and military questions.

It so happens that I have had long experience with politics, and I was sensitive to this question, especially the question of relations with the Soviet Union, and I have stayed in contact with friends who are quite concerned with these things. Thus I have a certain sensitivity which makes me take such and such a political position more easily than does my Talmud teacher, who would not say what I say. So, it's from a Jewish point of view, if you like, but it is mediated in a strictly Western way, since I am in great part a man who was shaped by the West. It is not necessary to distrust this Western part, but neither should one totally trust it.

Interviewer: I wonder if it is possible to locate a specifically Jewish morality from which to respond to political questions.

Levy: For me, it is not a matter of finding a specifically Jewish morality; it's been found for us. The interest of these texts is precisely that they relieve us of the idea that we need to establish, make, or elaborate a system of morality.

Interviewer: Is this morality different from the general Western tradition of morality?

Levy: Is wearing *tephillin*, phylacteries, within the reach of Western man? I don't believe so. Is refraining from mixing wool and linen in one's clothes something available to Western man?

Interviewer: Are those really ethical questions?

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Levy: Yes, they are. That's the essence of the problem. How do we define morality? Do we define it starting from the coordinates of Western spiritualism, that is, in terms of spiritual interiority, or in terms of what is at stake in the Torah?

Interviewer: All 613 commandments of the Torah are ethical laws, in your opinion?

Levy: What else?

Interviewer: Isn't there a difference between ritual and ethical laws? The ritual laws, such as the laws of sacrifice, don't really seem to deal with ethical questions.

Levy: Take the Hebrew word for sacrifice—*korban*. The root of *korban* is proximity, to draw closer. If the work of approach, of rapprochement between man and that dimension which I will quickly call the transcendent, is not ethical, I don't know what is. Ethics, as it is conventionally defined, is the reconstruction [*réparation*] of one's physical being in the world. In the best of cases, ethics tries to base itself on an internal trace of a moral imperative. Happily there is Kant, rather than no Kant. Happily there is a moral law, rather than no trace of an imperative. In this sense, a Jew is closer to Kant than to the Marquis de Sade, or to Nietzsche. But that's nothing at all. Several years after the categorical imperative was elaborated, a great man named Hegel said to Kant, what do you want to do with a categorical imperative? It's too formal for the affairs of the world, for politics. In politics, it is necessary to dirty your hands.

Western morality spends its time setting up an opposition between this formal attitude, what Hegel called the "beautiful soul," and the realistic attitude, the one that knows the way of the world. These two attitudes are at best the limits of a field, but they are not the ethical field itself. A realist is not a moral fellow, while one who is formally moral is not in the real world. The opposition of these two attitudes alludes to the real problem, namely, the ethical field itself, which has to do with the coming-into-being of the body (the ethical body, not the anatomical one). What are the 613 *mitzvot* if not a reconstruction of the body? It's no accident that the Jewish sages always said that the number of positive *mitzvot* corresponds to the number of organs in the body. Ethics, in the sense defined by the Torah, will occupy itself with correcting what is naturally, spontaneously immoral in the body. This occurs through the *tephillin*, the dietary laws, or the laws of sacrifice.

Before seeing things in detail, for example the *mitzvot*, it's first necessary to know what we're talking about. If you try to think about the *mitzvot* starting from the concept of Western morality, you're finished.

I have been speaking about the ethics that are at stake in the receiving of the Torah at Sinai. There is a more universal morality in the Torah, the seven commandments of Noah in Genesis. But the ethical dignity of Israel, which takes upon its shoulders 613 and not seven commandments, is considered greater than that of the sons of Noah. In any case, it is necessary to say that there are levels of ethics or morality, at least from a Jewish point of view. You can contest this distinction in principle and assert that every man, be he Jew or Greek, has the same relation to the moral imperative. You find this in St. Paul. It's nothing new; there can indeed be a relation to morality which does not pass through the 613 *mitzvot*. But that still leaves you with a completely different path of access to morality. That's what often drives many modern Jews crazy, the idea that there is a particular duty for the Jews.

Interviewer: I'd like to turn to your friendship with Sartre. Sartre seemed to have many Jewish friends during his life. He remarked that there was something special in a relationship with a Jew, a sincerity, a sensitivity, and also a shared skepticism of conventional ideas which was rare in Christians, who are beholden to tradition and ceremony. Wasn't Sartre thinking here especially of secular Jewish intellectuals and not of religious Jews, who are also beholden to tradition and ceremony?

Levy: He didn't know any religious Jews at all.

Interviewer: In your conversations with Sartre near the end of his life, he expressed a new understanding of the reality of Jewishness apart from the history and effects of persecution and anti-Semitism. What do you make of this new understanding?

Levy: On that point, things are very simple. Sartre knew only assimilated Jews who had no intellectual relation to Judaism and its roots. Thus, he too lacked any relation to Jewish existence, strictly speaking. From this point of view he shared at least the same ignorance of Jewish reality as everyone else, and he also had his share of prejudice. It's clear in his books, in the way he speaks about the Pharisees, the Kabbalah, and so forth—just like any other French writer. When he wrote *Anti-Semite and Jew* and spoke of his love for the Jews, it was love for these persecuted people; but he felt nothing for other Jewish things. For him, a Pharisee was essentially a hypocrite, just as one reads in the Gospels. The word "Pharisee" occurs more than a dozen times in his work, always meaning hypocrite.

Now it happened that in the course of our years of dialogue, when I turned toward the texts of Judaism, every morning as I arrived I would tell Sartre about these texts and the beginning of my instruction in them, and then we would

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discuss issues of leftism and the end of leftism. I told him these things for at least a year and a half before his death. He heard me speak of things that I had never spoken of before (because I hadn't been familiar with them), and that he had never heard of in his entire life: for example, talmudic texts and kabbalistic commentary that I had studied with my teacher at that point. I was flabbergasted how all that could be so absent from his horizon, even though he thought he knew about it.

Sartre found out how Jewish knowledge works by seeing its first effects on me. His first great impressions concerned the texts themselves, of which he had been unaware. He was in the process of learning that Jews could have their own manner of being and thinking, well in advance of their reactions to persecution. He had read the five volumes in the French edition of Salo Baron's *Social and Religious History of the Jews*. It was Simone de Beauvoir who read them to him, not I. He was very impressed by them, he was fascinated. Add to that the fact that Arlette had begun to translate the Talmud six months before he died. Every night he asked her how many pages she had finished, and she must have read to him from what she translated.

When he said all this in an interview in *Nouvel Observateur* [March 1980], there was an amazing scandal. The Sartreans said that I had manipulated him.

Interviewer: So Sartre's knowledge of Judaism was weak to average?

Levy: It was zero. Zero, compared with someone like Maurice Blanchot, who read what was in French, including the work of the scholar André Neher and of Levinas. Sartre read neither Levinas, nor André Neher, nor even Buber, who was also available in French. He read nothing at all. He wrote *Anti-Semite and Jew* without reading a book. It just came out of his head. It's stupefying!

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Artist in a Cause

Samuel Lipman

THE just-published autobiography of the sometime Soviet soprano Galina Vishnevskaya* is in many important ways a prime example of the tale of a prima donna's triumphs. Though as a rule it is rather more rewarding to listen to such artistic conquests than to read about them, we are not blessed with so many first-person accounts of what it is like to make music behind the Iron Curtain that we can afford to pass up even a biased account of what is, or rather was, a great career. Indeed, one is hard put to remember even a single instance of the personal story, written and published in the West, of an important Soviet musician; only the memoirs of Dmitri Shostakovich come to mind in this regard, and there has proved no way of adding to that book's undoubted general accuracy any convincing proof of its word-by-word authenticity.†

The claim that this is a book we are to take seriously is staked out even before *Galina*'s first words of text: the epigraph is a mighty tribute to Vishnevskaya's singing from the great Russian poet-hero of Soviet dissidence, Anna Akhmatova:

> A woman's voice glides like the wind
> Of black, of damp, of night
> And all it touches in its flight
> Suddenly is other . . .
> And what a mighty force
> Draws that enchanted voice there
> As if ahead were not the grave
> But the ascent of a mysterious stair.

Here, in fact, is a clear statement of what takes this book out of the domain of the success story. Not only am I a great artist, Vishnevskaya is proclaiming, but I am an artist in a great cause. The cause, too, is clear: it is Russia.

THE story Vishnevskaya begins to tell in her own words is one of horror, of the misery and suffering that inexorably followed the imposition of Bolshevik tyranny upon a backward country. She was born in 1926. Her mother was half-Gypsy, half-Polish, a beautiful woman who loved to sing. Her father was an alcoholic, and mean when under the influence; he too loved to sing, but he also chased her mother with an ax when he thought (correctly) she was involved with other men. Her father's drinking, and his subsequent rage, Vishnevskaya ascribes to the bloody crimes he had committed as a dedicated Communist during the putting down of the Kronstadt rebellion in 1921.

At the age of four, Vishnevskaya, who had spent only one year together with her parents, crossed the frozen Gulf of Finland on foot to live with her grandmother in one room of a communal apartment. Her grandmother had a pension of forty rubles a month, at a time "when meat cost eight rubles a pound." To survive, her grandmother had to sell her possessions, including a jeweled silver icon of the Virgin Mary; the icon had to be broken up into a formless lump before it would be bought by the state store. The diet was less than simple: salted cod, herring-head soup, buckwheat kasha, and sunflower oil as a fat. Ironically, given her horror of alcohol, drink once came to the rescue, when a friend of her grandmother's drank himself to death, leaving the young girl an insurance policy worth a thousand rubles.

Although she early learned to read on her own, school was interesting to Vishnevskaya only for the singing. She enthusiastically participated in school recitals, earning the name of "Galka the Artistka." She won prizes for her singing in spite of the poor instruction caused by the demands of the state that even music teachers fulfill production norms. For her tenth birthday, her mother, whom she was visiting in Leningrad, gave her a wind-up phonograph and some records of Tchaikowsky's *Eugene Onegin*; the child's love of singing now turned into a passion for opera. This passion, nurtured as it was on the private experience of the phonograph, soured when at the age of eighteen she heard *Onegin* at the Leningrad Opera. To make up for the disappointment, she read Pushkin, Lermontov, Tolstoy, and Balzac; and she took up drama and ballet.

Meanwhile, as Vishnevskaya remarks, everyday life continued around her—the life of the purges and the Great Terror. At school there was ceaseless indoctrination, and at home there was the frequent experience of neighbors being arrested and carried off; on one occasion she saw a young girl recaptured while attempting to escape from a prison truck. Everywhere there was the use even of children as informers. Vishnevskaya is driven to speculate:

> It would be interesting to know who was first in the infernal work of corrupting children's souls—the Nazis or the Commu-

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* *Galina: A Russian Story*, translated by Guy Daniels, Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 519 pp., $19.95.

† For a discussion of these memoirs, which were related to and edited by Solomon Volkov, see my article, "Shostakovich in Four Parts," COMMENTARY, November 1982.

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nists. It would seem the Soviet Union was a bit ahead.

For Vishnevskaya, as for so many below the highest level of state power, World War II was a nightmare. Evacuated from the front, she ended up in Kronstadt, a naval base suffering the same fate of blockade as nearby Leningrad. Starvation and cold were the immediate enemies, with the Germans always at the door. Vishnevskaya worked in an anti-aircraft factory, and met a submarine officer with whom she fell in love. They planned to be married after the war, but at the beginning of 1943, soon after the blockade was broken, her boyfriend was lost at sea.

In Leningrad by 1944, she was hired as an assistant lighting technician at a "palace of culture." She also enrolled in the Rimsky-Korsakov School of Music, and there for the first time began to study singing; her teacher, an amiable man who sang well, immediately proceeded to spoil all her natural high notes. In the same year she married a sailor, gaining from the marriage only her professional name of Vishnevsky. The marriage was soon over, and now, as Galina Vishnevskaya, she joined the Leningrad District Operetta Theater. From her position in the chorus she learned everybody's role by ear. When the predictable emergency occurred, she was able to substitute for the lead, and soon she was a major member of the company. Although touring conditions were primitive, and her high notes were still gone, she was able to continue by force of personality, a force which was to prove of great help not just in her future operatic career but also in her life in the USSR as a privileged, and caged, celebrity.

Her second marriage was closely associated with her career. Still eighteen, she married the director of the operetta troupe, a Jew (strangely, she nowhere mentions this) twenty-two years her elder. She quickly became pregnant, and managed, by sheer persistence, to have the baby in a hospital reserved for important functionaries. But the infant soon died of an infection. To make matters worse, her father was arrested soon after the war, despite his loyalty to the Stalin regime; he received the usual ten-year sentence in a camp.

This was, of course, the period of Stalin's resumption of the prewar purges. About Stalin's effect on the arts Vishnevskaya minces no words:

> Under the slogan "Down with the Cosmopolites!" a black plague spread throughout the Russian theater, and many of its best works were buried for years. One after another came the directives ordering theaters to stage contemporary Soviet plays glorifying the party. And the talentless writers, the playwrights, poets, and composers who for years had sharpened their quills waiting for their hour, rushed pell-mell to the trough, to pay hysterical tribute to the Soviet regime and its Great Leader, "the genius of all time and all people."
>
> What did it matter that, because of him, millions of virtually unarmed Soviet soldiers became cannon fodder during the first months of the war; that the Germans marched triumphantly through the Ukraine and Byelorussia, coming up to the very walls of Moscow and Leningrad; that in Leningrad alone more than a million and a half of the civilian population—old people, women, and children—died of starvation. That was all forgotten. The important thing was that the Great Leader had spoken, and opportunity was at hand. Forward, leaders of art and culture! Curry favor, music critics! Get the traitors! Sic 'em! Sic 'em!

As the 1940's were coming to an end, Vishnevskaya at last found a voice teacher who could help her. Under the guidance of this old woman, who lived solely on her small pension and the private lessons she gave for a pittance, Vishnevskaya's old high notes returned, and she felt reborn as a singer. Still, she continued to sing operetta. She managed, too, to survive a bout of tuberculosis, which would have been fatal if not for the availability of streptomycin which had been newly discovered in the West.

Now recovered in health and with her voice back, she tried out for an apprentice program at the Bolshoi Opera in Moscow. She caused a sensation at her auditions, and—after solving the thorny problem of finding a place to live in Moscow—was engaged with the possibility of singing Leonore in Beethoven's *Fidelio*. Even the constant fear that her father's conviction would be found out and held against her could not dim her optimism and her determination to succeed at the Bolshoi on her own terms. Once again, her words are strong and telling:

> Life had taught me not to fear, not to cower, not to tolerate the slightest injustice. . . . And now I was supposed to tremble before the significant glances of those scum? Don't hold your breath! You're after the wrong woman, overlords of art!

Before Vishnevskaya came to the Bolshoi in 1952, her encounters with the pervasive domination of Soviet life by politics had been conditioned by her own status as an insignificant music-hall performer. Now, though political terror was still omnipresent, she possessed—and she knew it—something the authorities wanted. She could sing, she could move an audience—above all, because she was an artist, she could confer a certain legitimacy on the palpably illegitimate Communist regime. By reason of this she could also get away with refusing to participate in the socialist-realist operas of Dmitri Kabalevsky and that musical archbureaucrat, Tikhon Khrennikov.

Not only were artists paid high fees under the Stalin regime, but the Great Leader himself protected individual artists and insured opulent productions with unlimited rehearsal time. His death, indeed, was fulsomely mourned at the Bolshoi; company sopranos went so far as to sing Schumann's *Träumerei* as Stalin's body lay in state in the Hall of Columns of the House of Unions. As it happens, Vishnevskaya missed this opportunity to serve art: she was judged a possible security risk because at the time she had only been six months with the Bolshoi. Here, after noting bitterly that Sergei Prokofiev's death on the same day as Stalin's deprived the composer

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of knowing that his tormentor was no more, she goes on to mock the contrast between the lavish funeral of the dictator and the almost ignored ceremony for the great composer. And then she explodes: "Mother Russia, how much longer will you grieve for your hangmen? Fight back! Avenge your ravaged, tortured children! Clearly your time has not yet come."

In spite of her inclination to independence, Vishnevskaya now began to live among the mighty. She entertained for Kremlin leaders, and saw the luxury in which this exploiting class lived. Clearly Vishnevskaya herself was now becoming one of the anointed. Her career at the Bolshoi was blooming, with the leading roles in both *Fidelio* and *Eugene Onegin* securely in her repertory.

In 1955 she met the already famous Soviet cellist Mstislav Rostropovich, first in Moscow and then in Prague. Within four days of their meeting in Prague, they were "already in fact man and wife, though no one else knew about it." It proved difficult to get her second husband to accept his supersession, but the whole matter was made easier by the lucky circumstance that they had not been legally married at all. Rostropovich's mother only gradually accepted this intrusion into her son's attachment to his family, and living conditions were still bad despite the couple's growing fame. But fortune intervened in an ironic way: the then Premier of the Soviet Union, Nikolai Bulganin, developed a crush on Vishnevskaya, and displaying her customary pluck, she got him to include Rostropovich in his invitations. She also got him to ease such problems as KGB pressure on her to act as an informer at the Bolshoi; and with Bulganin's help the authorities finally allowed her and Rostropovich to move into the cooperative apartment Rostropovich had bought and paid for some years earlier.

Though Rostropovich had been closely associated for some years with Prokofiev, the composer had died too early for Vishnevskaya to meet him through her new husband. Now, however, in 1955 she was able to begin a friendship with Shostakovich, the first of the three great men—the others are Solzhenitsyn and Benjamin Britten—who serve her as artistic and moral lodestars. Shostakovich loved her singing, and even wrote some music for her. But her portrait of him is chiefly important for its corroboration that Shostakovich was a man broken in every way but the most critical one—his determination to write at least some music in his own voice.

For Vishnevskaya, 1956 was a year of firsts. She made her first visit to East Germany, to sing in *Fidelio* and *Onegin*. She also received her first award, the title of Honored Artist of the Russian Soviet Socialist Republic. The same year she was pregnant with her first daughter; she cannot help contrasting her treatment in this confinement with the one ten years earlier. Indeed, both the Rostropoviches were now becoming world-famous. Rostropovich made his British and American debuts in 1956, the year of Khrushchev's momentous anti-Stalin speech to the Twentieth Party Congress; Vishnevskaya toured the United States for the first time in 1959. Now open to them, individually and jointly, were gala appearances in the greatest capitals, major recording contracts, and opportunities to use the limited hard-currency fees allowed them by the government to purchase in the West the consumer goods then—and still—unobtainable at home. And like Emil Gilels, Sviatoslav Richter, and David Oistrakh, Vishnevskaya and Rostropovich were now also roving ambassadors, convincing evidence not only that socialism worked, but also that Soviet Communism was the authentic heir to the heritage of Russian culture and civilization.

But what looked so fine abroad was dreadfully hollow and false at home. A jail is no less a jail because its prisoners make goods which can be marketed with pride on the outside. The years after Stalin's death were to prove both that the permanent Russia, the Russia of the past, had not died, and that the regime of Stalin's successors was not about to cooperate in its own basic reform and transformation. Perhaps the first sign that matters were not to go forward in the direction of ever-increasing liberalization was the hysterical reaction by those in power to Boris Pasternak's receipt of the 1958 Nobel Prize for *Doctor Zhivago*. Rostropovich refused to make a speech against Pasternak, and Vishnevskaya also refused to sign the letter of protest against him gotten up at the Bolshoi. From this time forth the Rostropoviches were to receive the devoted attentions of Ekaterina Furtseva, the Soviet Minister of Culture who, despite continual drunkenness and financial crookedness, managed to remain in her post for fourteen years.

Even the couples' friendship with Benjamin Britten—Vishnevskaya met him in the summer of 1961 at the Aldeburgh Festival, Rostropovich had met him a year earlier—was not always to Furtseva's taste. Britten wrote the soprano part in his *War Requiem* (1962) for Vishnevskaya, but she was not allowed to perform it at the world premiere in Coventry Cathedral because one of the singers, Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau, was a German and therefore representative of the World War II enemy. Britten, like Shostakovich, also wrote songs for Vishnevskaya, and with his friend and associate, the singer Peter Pears, he spent a considerable amount of time in Russia on vacation with the Rostropoviches. Vishnevskaya's account of how hard it was to find decent food for Britten and Pears brings home the contrast between official red-carpet treatment for guests of the state and the real level at which nonofficial existence in the USSR is carried on.

Of all the transgressions of Vishnevskaya and her cellist husband, it was their behavior toward Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn from 1968 onward that made their continued life in the Soviet Union impossible. Rostropovich had learned that the famous writer was in the audience at a concert. He hoped that Solzhenitsyn would come backstage afterward; when he didn't, Rostropovich sought him out the next day. The two men became friends,

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and Rostropovich invited Solzhenitsyn to spend the winter of 1968-69 at his dacha outside Moscow. Surprisingly, the ever-suspicious Solzhenitsyn accepted. He was to remain a more or less permanent guest until the spring of 1973, less than one year before his expulsion from the USSR. When, in 1971, the Soviet campaign against the award of the Nobel Prize to Solzhenitsyn was at its height, Rostropovich wrote an open letter to the world press in which he referred back to the campaign against Pasternak, and to the censuring of Shostakovich and Prokofiev. Disclaiming an interest in political and economic questions, he asked:

> Why in our literature and art do people completely incompetent in this field so often have the final word? Why are they given the right to discredit our art in the eyes of our people? . . . I openly say what I think. Talent, of which we are proud, must not be submitted to the assaults of the past.

This was surely too much for the men in the Kremlin. The screws were now turned in earnest. Rostropovich's career at home was relegated to the provinces. He was no longer allowed to conduct at the Bolshoi. Told that all would be forgiven if he signed a letter condemning Andrei Sakharov, he refused. An attempt was made to incriminate Vishnevskaya by getting her to take $400 illegally out of the country as she was departing for an engagement at La Scala; she refused. In a bizarre turn of fortune, Rostropovich was reduced to preparing a performance—with Vishnevskaya singing—of *Die Fledermaus* at the Moscow Operetta Theater. Though at first Vishnevskaya was treated less roughly, it soon became apparent that her name and reputation too were slowly being erased from musical life.

The time had come to get out. On March 29, 1974, the same day that Solzhenitsyn's wife and children left to join him in exile, Vishnevskaya and Rostropovich made ready an application to Leonid Brezhnev to live abroad for two years. They were amazed to receive permission in record time, but the reason was soon apparent: Senator Edward Kennedy, then in Moscow, had intervened with Brezhnev at Leonard Bernstein's request. Vishnevskaya's chief worry was that somehow Rostropovich would be persuaded to stay; but in fact he was content to leave, and the couple's two daughters (a second girl had been born in 1958) were overjoyed at the prospect.

Even their (separate) departures were not without drama. When Rostropovich passed through customs at the Moscow airport he had with him his decorations, among them gold medals from the Royal Society of London and the London Philharmonic, and (though he is not Jewish) from Israel, as well as Soviet medals, given to all residents of Moscow, for "the development of the virgin soil" and "the 800th anniversary of Moscow." The Soviet medals, made of tin, he was allowed to keep, but the gold medals—because they were gold—he had to leave behind. On Vishnevskaya's last night in Moscow, she was visited by a star tenor at the Bolshoi who had joined the company only one year after her—and by his companion, the KGB officer who had tried to recruit her as an informer; only then did she realize that the tenor had been an informer all along. Vishnevskaya's story ends as her plane takes off from Moscow, carrying her into an exile at once invited and dreaded. The reader can hardly escape the feeling that for her, as for so many other Soviet outcasts, Russia is a motherland bitterly forsaken.

As Vishnevskaya's text is preceded by a poem by Akhmatova, so it is followed by a letter to the Rostropoviches from another, and perhaps the greatest, hero of the Russian resistance, Solzhenitsyn. Dated last February and obviously written to accompany this book, it is an eloquent tribute to their help:

> Without your protection and support, I simply would not have survived . . . you didn't even tell me of the growing constraints and harassment you were subjected to. You created an atmosphere I never dreamed possible in the Soviet Union. Without it, I most likely would have burst, and wouldn't have held out until 1974. . . .
>
> You paid a cruel price for it, especially Galya, who lost her theater forever. No gratitude of mine can compensate for such losses. One can only derive strength from the knowledge that in our time we Russians are fated to a common doom, and one can only hope that the Lord will not punish us to the end.

Though *Galina* contains much about the daily life and thoughts of an opera singer, it is in this respect neither better nor worse than the usual run of operatic memoirs. Notwithstanding the plentiful evidence here that Vishnevskaya was a relatively quick study, a hard worker, and a passionate performer, it is not to her writing that one must look to find out what she was as an artist. Such evidence can now only come from her recordings, once fairly numerous in the catalogues but now for the most part quite difficult to obtain.

Vishnevskaya's recordings, made from the late 1950's through the late 1970's, first in the USSR and then in the West, suggest that she was a kind of Russian Maria Callas, gifted with perhaps a more natural vocal production but lacking Callas's brilliant flashes of consummate *bel canto* technique. For the listener, what links the two divas is the sense of total absorption in the character, of a searing intensity which often threatens to break the bounds of proper artistic restraint. Such inner abandon hardly conduces to smooth and even vocalism; all too often Vishnevskaya's passion, like that of Callas, transforms a sung note into a shriek. Even where a descent into bathos does not occur, time and time again one is conscious in Vishnevskaya's singing of the inexorable and insupportable demands her emotions make upon the fabric of her voice.

Thus it is not to this Russian singer's early recordings of *Casta diva* (from Bellini's *Norma*) or of *Pace, pace, mio Dio* (from Verdi's *La Forza del Destino*) that one must go for historically great singing; in these major tests of the prima donna's art, the crown is not won by Vishnevskaya but by such

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singers of the past as Rosa Ponselle and Claudia Muzio, both of whom have left behind imperishable versions of these arias.* Even in her most famous role, that of Tatiana (in *Eugene Onegin*), too high a price is paid in vocal steadiness for the overwhelming "Russianness" of the portrayal; in the famous "Letter Scene" of Act I, Ljuba Welitsch's vocally impeccable 1948 recording (sung in German) is likely to give Western music lovers considerably greater pleasure.†

Remarkably, given Vishnevskaya's huge voice and overwhelming appetite for the operatic stage, she is a magnificent interpreter of the unaccountably neglected songs of Glinka, Tchaikowsky, and Rachmaninoff. To this quintessentially Russian repertory she brings a warmth and affecting inwardness unmatched since the Rachmaninoff recordings forty years ago of the late and very much missed Jennie Tourel.** Here, at least for this listener, are the true small joys and large sufferings of Russia, portrayed on a human rather than a theatrical scale. And on these recordings too, her husband is a marvelously sensitive and skillful accompanist (on the piano, of course, rather than the cello).

WHATEVER one's critical objections, Vishnevskaya and Rostropovich both are undoubtedly among the major musicians of the day. But it would be a mistake to see their importance only—or mostly—in musical terms. Like their even greater friend Solzhenitsyn, they are artists who have managed to merge their art with their country's fate. The three of them consciously and unconsciously speak for Russia even when they are in exile; indeed, they perform this emblematic function in a manner and to a degree which long tyranny has made impossible for their countrymen.

Our admiration for their courage in carrying out this dangerous task should not, however, blind us to at least one aspect of the message so bravely spoken. On the evidence of this book, Vishnevskaya, and by implication Rostropovich, speak for an eternal Russia, the Russia beloved of the Slavophiles of the last century and of this. This point of view they share with Solzhenitsyn, and indeed are his disciples in it. Thus we should not be surprised that in Vishnevskaya's book so little—if any—mention is made of the special sufferings to which Jews have been subject under the Soviet yoke since Stalin's death. From reading this book by a non-Jewish Russian musician who spent many years at the center of the Soviet musical world, one would not suspect that the past two decades have witnessed a tidal wave of emigration from the USSR by Jewish musicians of both large and small careers; from reading this book by an important member of the Soviet dissident intelligentsia, one would have no way of knowing that Jews have been specially disqualified from participating in Soviet intellectual life.

This reservation aside, Galina Vishnevskaya has written a book of great significance. A serious reading of it ought to make impossible any return to the old knee-jerk ideas of cultural exchange as a panacea for all the ills of the U.S.-USSR relationship. What Vishnevskaya has to say about who gained the most from the travels of Soviet artists abroad should stay long in the mind; who gained the most were the Soviet "authorities, who took our earnings and used them for maintaining our embassies and paying our spies."

AN EVEN more remarkable lesson is to be taken from *Galina*. This is that in our confrontation with the Soviet Union, Americans no less than Russians have no honorable choice but resistance. Vishnevskaya and Rostropovich made their choice in the pain and ignominy of daily life in a dictatorship. We, at least, can learn to make it through a rigorous effort to apprehend the realities of a world still blessedly foreign to our national and personal experience. In that effort, a work like *Galina* can be of inestimable value.

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* Vishnevskaya's performance of the Bellini and the Verdi were available some years ago on Artia ALP157. The Ponselle performances may be found on RCA VIC-1507, and those of Muzio on Seraphim 60111; the Ponselle disc has been deleted, but the Muzio is still available.

† Vishnevskaya's complete recording of *Onegin*, done in Paris in 1968 with the Bolshoi company, was available on Melodiya/Angel SRCL-4115. The Welitsch recording was available on Seraphim 60202. It must be noted that Walter Susskind's simply expressive conducting for Welitsch is much to be preferred to Rostropovich's mooning and heaving accompaniment of his wife.

** Among the recordings (all of them unavailable) of this material which I have heard should be mentioned Tchaikowsky songs on London OS 26141 and Philips PHS-900-021, Rachmaninoff and Glinka songs on Deutsche Grammophon 2530 725, and more Tchaikowsky songs on Angel S-37166.

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Dutch Treats

Richard Grenier

If you are a neurotic, alcoholic, Mariolatrous, Catholic homosexual on the verge of going over the edge, have I got the film for you! It is Dutch, yes, Dutch, *The 4th Man*. For Holland has suddenly developed a first-rate, "quality" cinema, capable of turning out decadent films with the best of them—films on the cutting edge of the new sensibility and even of social change, such as *A Question of Silence*, a movie so rabidly feminist as to be pathological, the most lunatic feminist film I have ever seen. And both movies are skillfully directed, of course, for Holland is hot. There is a large element of fashion in this, naturally, but also a bit of mystery. The muse of the cinema has touched with her magic wand Sweden, Poland, Argentina, Brazil, Cuba (for the first two or three years of the Castro regime), Australia, postwar Germany, Hungary—all minor film countries suddenly thrust into the limelight. But the *Netherlands*, you say, *Holland*, with its tulips and windmills, where housewives do not sweep the sidewalks in front of their houses but get down on their hands and knees and scrub them to make sure they're spotless (I've seen it many times with my own eyes)? Where the average per-capita attendance at movies used to be half that of neighboring France? Where Dutch film production was until the day before yesterday positively negligible? Well, yes. It has come to pass. Holland has caught the movie bug.

It did not all start with *The 4th Man*. Paul Verhoeven, that film's director, is responsible for a sizable share of the New Dutch cinema himself, having already made *Soldier of Orange* (a World War II story which, in an innovative U.S. release strategy, showed its commercial strength first in Los Angeles before opening in New York), *Turkish Delight* (swinging Amsterdam), and *Spetters* (Rotterdam bikers). Both *Soldier of Orange* and *Turkish Delight* were nominated for Academy Awards as the best foreign-language films of the year, and it is worth noting that even though foreign films account for only a small fraction of the American movie market, the denizens of Hollywood are among their most avid consumers. The average U.S. moviegoer might not see a foreign film from one year to the next, but the chances are that the director of his favorite American movies sees them all, and foreign films are consequently very influential. Spotted in *Soldier of Orange*, Rutger Hauer was cast by Ridley Scott as the second lead in *Blade Runner*. Renée Soutendijk, who starred in both *Spetters* and *The 4th Man*, has already been signed for the next film by John Frankenheimer. Director Verhoeven himself, as I write, is in Spain, making a new movie for Hollywood's Orion Pictures.

The 4th Man is based on a loosely autobiographical novel by a Dutch *enfant terrible* named Gerard Reve, who has spent most of his life alternately winning Dutch literary prizes and scandalizing the Dutch public. Openly homosexual, he converted to Roman Catholicism at the age of thirty-five (there are now almost as many Catholics as Protestants in the Netherlands). Having already been found "in conflict with public order and morals," Reve was brought to trial for "contemptuous blasphemy" in 1966, not long after his conversion, and the sensational trial proved to be the scandal of the year. In 1968, awarded still another literary prize, Reve kissed the Minister of Culture enthusiastically, and later gave a televised party at the Church of the Sacred Heart to celebrate. There is something about a Puritanical society in decay that produces sports like Gerard Reve. After an attractive young woman schoolteacher masturbated on camera on the Dutch national television network in the interests of "sex education" several years ago, one would think it was getting pretty hard to shock the Dutch, but Gerard Reve has a gift.

The film of *The 4th Man* stays fairly close to the Reve novel. Not to put too fine a point on it, it is about a man with an obsessive dread of women, or at least of aggressive, sexual women. If the woman could arrange to be like the Virgin Mary, of course, Holy Mary Mother of God, that would be something else. But how often can you expect a break like that? Under the film's opening titles we see a crucifix, with the crucified Christ, and over Christ's face, portrayed in his final agony, a spider has woven her web. A fly has become caught in the web, and the spider is slowly beginning to devour him.

The film's opening scene is hardly more cheerful. Gerard Reve (the novelist has given the protagonist his own name) wakes up one morning with the cold sweats, hallucinating, haunted by nightmares, needing a drink. Brilliantly played by Jeroen Krabbé, he is not noticeably homosexual, but after a big glass of red wine he calls to his boyfriend downstairs to drive him to the Amsterdam railroad station. After being answered with a surly "No," he hallucinates that he is strangling the boyfriend with what looks like a woman's black bra, but then, shaking and trembling, makes his way by himself to the station and, several incidents and hallucinations later, to Flushing, a Dutch coastal town where he is to speak before a literary group. For he is (autobiography again) a celebrated if scandalous writer. During

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the literary evening Gerard meets a beautiful, blonde, rather forward young woman named Christine (Renée Soutendijk) and, to the surprise of no one and due more to her initiative than to his, he ends up that night in her bed. During a slightly odd coupling, she mounts him and he presses her breasts sideways to flatten them out and make her look more like a boy. Once asleep, Gerard has his usual assortment of nightmares: first a peaceful vision of a woman dressed in the Virgin's pale blue whom he saw carrying an infant on the train, then three butchered bulls, then roses, then finally Christine, his bedmate, who calmly, with an ordinary pair of scissors, lifts his genitalia and castrates him. He wakes up screaming.

Christine comforts him, and pampers him the next morning with breakfast in bed and gifts. She has recently been widowed and —strangely composed and with no sign at all of vulnerability—she invites him to move to the resort town of Flushing to live with her. Gerard declines in some kind of inner panic, saying he must continue to live in Amsterdam. As it happens, Christine runs a beauty parlor on the ocean front. She has her own line of beauty products named "Delilah" and, even as Delilah unto Samson, Christine trims Gerard's hair. It is off-season and we see the cold, gray waves of the North Sea beating relentlessly against the winter shore. By night, we notice the name of the beauty shop, "SPHINX," outlined in chilly, blue neon. Except that the "H" and the "X" are electrically defective and dark, leaving only "SPIN" —a detail lost on much of the American audience but which in Dutch happens to mean "spider." On the train down from Amsterdam, in fact, Gerard had stared nervously at a reproduction of a painting of the biblical Samson and Delilah—she who robs Samson of his strength by cutting his hair. In the beauty shop a woman—her face hidden by a beauty mask—says to Gerard ominously, "When you are warned, you must listen."

But he does not listen. While Christine is out of the apartment, Gerard snoops through her private correspondence and sees a photograph of an attractive young man whom he had pursued at the train station in Amsterdam. From the correspondence it is not hard to deduce that he is Christine's regular lover—away most of the time in Germany—and Gerard decides to stay with Christine for a spell in order to meet him. Cunningly he induces Christine to make a trip to Cologne and bring back her friend, Herman (Thom Hoffman), and while she is away he burrows through all her private possessions and finds home movies which reveal that Christine has been married and widowed not once, but *three* times. All three husbands, moreover, have died in suspicious circumstances.

Gerard's neurotic anxieties seize him and he becomes wild-eyed with fear. Who will be the fourth man? Herman? Himself? Trembling, Gerard drinks himself into a stupor—and wakes up to find Christine and Herman, already in the house, back from Germany. On a recreational drive which ends up in a cemetery, Gerard and Herman chance on Christine's family tomb with the urns of her three cremated husbands. After seducing Herman sexually (accomplished without much difficulty), Gerard warns him that he must flee Christine; she is deadly. He announces that he himself is going to get as far away from her and as fast as possible. Herman laughs off the warning, but agrees to drive Gerard to the train station so he can make good his "escape." On the way to the station, with Gerard driving, they swerve to avoid being stopped at a construction site by a truck carrying a load of steel-reinforcing rods and one of rods, protruding, is driven into one of Herman's eyes and straight on through his brain. A gruesome death.

GERARD has a nervous breakdown and is taken to a hospital, where his explanation of the accident sounds, indeed, like the ravings of a madman. Christine visits him in the hospital and while there falls in with a tanned, handsome young wind-surfer to whom she takes a fancy. They go off together, and one has the feeling that, if all goes smoothly, the young wind-surfer with a bit of luck will end up the *fifth* man. Gerard, for his part, is saved by the Virgin Mary. The woman in pale blue whom he has been catching glimpses of all during the movie, clearly portrayed in such a manner as to symbolize the Virgin, turns out to be a nurse at the hospital and, taking Gerard in his wheelchair, she wheels him out into the hospital garden to a place of peace. *Hail Mary, full of grace, Save me from predatory women.*

As I say, if you are a neurotic, Mariolatrous, homosexual with a morbid dread of aggressive women, this is the film for you. The big surprise, however, is that droves of apparently healthy heterosexual Protestants and Jews are seeing *The 4th Man* also, plus, no doubt, many a backsliding heterosexual Catholic, to the point that it is by far the most successful foreign-language film of the season. At this writing, it has almost a three-to-one box-office lead over Jean-Luc Godard's latest offering, *First Name: Carmen,* which is in second position. Volker Schlöndorff's unspeakable adaptation of Marcel Proust's *Swann in Love*, although still in its first month, is trailing by a four-to-one margin. And the highly touted Eric Rohmer's new *Full Moon in Paris*, also in its first month, is trailing by nine to one. There is no doubt about it. For Holland *The 4th Man* is something of an event.

BUT the other new Dutch movie, *A Question of Silence*, is also an event, if of a somewhat different order. The first film of writer-director Marleen Gorris, it caters, to say the least, to a somewhat different audience. It is the story of three "ordinary" Dutch women, played by Nelly Frijda, Edda Barends, and Henriette Tol (lacking the names of the fictional characters, I shall use those of the actresses). Judging by their behavior in the movie, life—which is to say mankind (as opposed to womankind)—has treated them very ill. They have a sense of intense, generalized grievance toward men which, according to the author, seems to entitle them to take the most extreme

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actions in honest retribution. Are they justified? Do they win and hold our sympathy? Be forewarned: *A Question of Silence* is by intention a "gender-gap" movie. When I saw it at the Waverly in Greenwich Village in New York, women (three-quarters of the audience, including by all appearances an appreciable number of lesbians) went all the way, their faces manic, laughing hysterically at the moments of retribution. Men sat in silence, their faces glum. The author's bedside book—which we glimpse once or twice during the film—is apparently Ann Jones's *Women Who Kill*, one of those "must" books for the ultra-feminist set. A quote to give the flavor: "A baby girl born tomorrow stands a chance of growing up to stick a kitchen knife into an assaultive husband; but her chances of becoming President are too slim to be statistically significant." (I saw the film after the nomination of Geraldine Ferraro, but I doubt if the audience's reactions were much altered.)

First: Nelly Frijda, a plump, boisterous, jolly barmaid. Nelly's husband left her some years back, but we are given no indication of how this came about. Was he a cad? Was there bitterness? Was there mutual estrangement, perhaps even offensive behavior on her part? We are not told. Nelly pours out beers from behind the bar for the tavern's largely male clientele early in the film, engaging in constant, high-spirited badinage with the customers. There is a certain amount of bad language from these customers, but Nelly gives as good as she gets, laughing constantly, loudly, raucously. Is this demeaning for Nelly, to have been reduced to this state of coarseness? If so, it would be hard to tell, for she takes it all in her stride, giving rather better than she gets.

Our second ordinary Dutch woman is Edda Barends, a taciturn housewife. Her husband returns from his day's work drawn, tired, perhaps under tension. Grumpily, over some connubial chore left undone, he asks Edda why she didn't do it: "You haven't been doing anything all day." That is all we need to know about this male pig (and it is about all we are told). Here Edda has been slaving all day, cooking, cleaning, and taking care of three children (we are shown none of this, but I imagine it is subsumed), and her husband has the unmitigated gall to say she *"hasn't been doing anything all day"*? Of course, we are not told anything about what kind of day the husband has had. Perhaps he has been worked liked a horse, abused, and humiliated by his superiors. But no matter. Any man who would make a remark like that to his wife is a callous, unfeeling, phallocratic male supremacist, and his wife is little better than his serf.

The third ordinary Dutchwoman, Henriette Tol, is an executive secretary, working for a male manager—the work relationship alone being enough to establish her condition of serfdom. Although Henriette is shown to have a modest, submissive, self-effacing manner at work, we are—none too subtly—made aware that her grasp of the concern's affairs might well qualify her for a managerial position.

AT LUNCHTIME the three women, who don't know one another, all chance to be in a large shopping mall and happen, furthermore, all to be in the same clothing shop at the same time. They browse about, looking at this or that perfectly conventionally, until one of them, Edda, the housewife, seeing an item she likes, furtively slips it into her shopping bag. The manager, a middle-aged man far taller than any of the three women, spots the act of shoplifting and walks over to Edda. His face rueful and ironic, obviously with no intention of turning her over to the police, he opens her bag and shows her the item she has just stolen from the clothes rack. Awareness of the attempted shoplifting somehow spreads through the store, and again we see the manager's rueful face. At most he has an "Oh, you naughty girl" look, but since there is not a hint of "Thief! Thief! You'll pay for this, you miserable little sneak!" it seems to me that Edda has had the good luck to fall upon a kindly manager.

Whereupon occurs the key scene in the movie. Edda, Nelly, and Henriette—and not a signal is exchanged—slowly begin to close in on the manager. Edda looks about 5′ 2″, and the other two are not much bigger, but they move for all the world as if they were Clint Eastwood, Burt Reynolds, and Sylvester Stallone coming in for the kill. With such unlikely weapons as coat hangers and an ashtray, the three women strike the manager, fell him, and (his body now off camera) proceed to beat, kick, and pummel his prostrate form until—according to later accounts—he is quite dead and his body is a bloody mess. His genitalia, in particular, as we also subsequently learn, are so mashed and lacerated as to be no longer recognizable as such. Watching this act of butchery are a half-dozen other female shoppers who observe the episode with what appears to be sullen approval. Or perhaps it is merely contained approval. If our three heroines were to step aside and make room for them, perhaps every woman in the store would leap forward to join in the butchery.

AN interesting case, wouldn't you say? What has the store manager done to deserve such an unappetizing fate at the hands of three unknown women? Are they perhaps crazy? This, in fact, is what the Dutch authorities are wondering; with the three women apprehended and incarcerated in a prison that could pass for your average Hilton hotel, they send a female psychiatrist to decide on their sanity. And this psychiatrist, in her quest for "the truth," becomes the drama's central character and its *raisonneur*.

The psychiatrist and her husband enter the film as an upscale, up-to-date Thoroughly Modern Couple. They are both professionals; she, a psychiatrist; he, a lawyer. They are both "liberated." After she has been slaving all day over a hot psyche, her hubsand enters with a kitchen spoon in his hand and says, "Dinner's ready, dear." There's none of this macho stuff. So when the psychiatrist begins her questioning of the three

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murderers, her initial assumption, like that of the authorities, is that in order to have committed such an utterly motiveless crime they must be in some way deranged. But in her lengthy interrogation of each of the culprits, she finds (with the help of the author-director) that each of these women is amazingly *normal*. The implication—outlandish but unmistakable—is that every *normal* woman, if she came to her senses and gave a moment's thought to the servitude and humiliation imposed on her sex, would be perfectly justified if she went about killing men indiscriminately.

Would the punishment fit the crime? The psychiatrist does not address this question directly, but, as she proceeds with her questioning, the justice of the female "cause" is gradually borne in on her and she becomes progressively more troubled. She visits the employer of Henriette, the secretary, for example, and is told that Henriette was an excellent executive secretary. "Did you ever consider appointing her to the board?" the psychiatrist asks. Since not many women or men leapfrog from secretary to the board of directors of Royal Dutch Shell (or whatever), the employer is slightly surprised by the question and answers, "But she was a secretary," which brings a narrowing to the eyes of the woman psychiatrist. Now *here* was oppression. Not even that a secretary wasn't named to the board, perhaps, but an awareness that *the whole system* kept Henriette confined to the menial rank of secretary. Surely, after such oppression, could a woman who murdered the first man she encountered be anything but normal?

Now the reader of this plot summary would hardly suspect it, but the female three-quarters of the audience at the Waverly found *A Question of Silence* uproariously funny, and what they were finding funny were all the occasions, large and small, when a male got his comeuppance. I will give one example. After committing the murder, the three women are in a state of boundless euphoria, and each, in her own manner, finds a way of celebrating. Henriette, for her part, is approached by a man in the street who takes her for a prostitute. Whereupon—one sees it as plainly as if it were writ large on her forehead—she thinks, "Aha! I'll teach him! I'll treat him the way men treat *women*!" They proceed to his hotel room. He lies supine upon the bed in the "female" position. Without taking off her clothes, Henriette climbs on top of him in the "male-dominant" position. Raising her skirt, she permits (I assume) penetration. With no show of emotion, she jogs up and down for a while until she produces (I assume) orgasm, after which she climbs off and stands beside the bed, fully dressed and defiant. This whole scene produces an uninterrupted gale of laughter from the female section of the audience. And when the man, thinking Henriette has rendered him a service (and not realizing, the fool, that he has rendered *her* the service), gets out his wallet and hands her some bills, which she accepts, the theater positively explodes with female mirth. Henriette leaves the hotel room with a sneer of contempt for the man, which produces another explosion of female glee, plus some cheers. Which is to say that I was sitting in an audience of women who had drunk so deep of feminist doctrine that they had lost their wits, for a male-female prostitute scene makes no sense at all played in reverse.

Enough masculine indignities—real or theoretical—had been injected into the film to keep women in the audience laughing regularly. For the first ten minutes or so I could hear one man's voice joining in the laughter, but he soon fell silent, aware, somewhat belatedly, that there was nothing for him to laugh at at all. At several subsequent bursts of laughter from the audience, I turned to look at the faces, and it was the same every time, row after row: manic female, manic female, manic female, somber male; manic female, manic female, manic female, somber male. The show, as they say, was in the house.

Up on the screen, the film trudged senselessly along. Our woman psychiatrist becomes more and more sympathetic to the three murderers, more and more convinced they are sane, and hence more and more persuaded their act was a reasonable one, a rational, just, and even laudable response to the masculine oppression under which they suffer. The juridical question of the "assignability" of responsibility for the supposed oppression is never dealt with. Why this particular man? Was he an oppressor just by virtue of his sex? Also, the psychiatrist's sympathies seem to push her in a perverse direction. Practically speaking, if she sympathizes with the women and feels their action justified, she should report them all insane, allowing them to "cop an insanity plea." The direction in which she is heading, declaring them all sane and fully responsible for their actions, will bring down on them the full rigors of the law. But our author-director, Miss Gorris, is engaged in a pedagogical enterprise which far transcends mere legality or practicality.

THE last scenes take place in the courtroom at the trial of the three women. During a break the psychiatrist and her lawyer husband lunch at a nearby restaurant, and the husband says that his wife really ought to declare the women insane. But they're *not* insane! protests the wife. They're perfectly normal! Their reaction was perfectly normal! Well, the husband answers, say the're insane anyway. Also, he adds, it will look bad for him as a lawyer if she takes such an erratic position. "So, you see?" the movie seems to say. "For all his cooking and cleaning and, 'Dinner is ready, dear,' when the battle lines are drawn even her own husband sides with the oppressors."

During the afternoon session in the courtroom, the public prosecutor asks, "Could men have committed such a crime?" which makes fat Nelly the barmaid burst out laughing. And she laughs and laughs. Then Edda the housewife begins to laugh. Then Henriette the secretary laughs. Then the women in the public seats laugh. Then the woman psychiatrist, who was in the middle of her testimony, catches this laughing infection. And they all laugh, and laugh, and

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laugh, and laugh. And, all things considered, it is one of the most intensely boring climaxes for a movie that could possibly be imagined, and might even throw some people into deep depression. The author's rationale, I assume, is that men commit comparable crimes against women every day, which, even if it were true, would be essentially mirthless. Generalized laughter, in any event, sometimes "at the craziness of it all," is one of the stalest ways to end a movie.

We are not *quite* at the end, however. As our lady psychiatrist leaves the law courts, two parties are waiting for her: one, her husband, at the foot of the grand outside stairs, a bit to the right; two, off to the side, a group of women whom we recognize as those menacingly present in the clothing store at the time of the murder, women, we now realize, who would have gladly mashed a testicle or two themselves if they'd had the chance. Just as the psychiatrist is emerging from the building's main exit, a man brushes by her and snarls, "Get out of my way, cunt!"—a remark, in fact, rarely heard in front of Dutch law courts, any more than it is heard at London's Old Bailey, or Paris' Palais de Justice, or the Federal Building in Foley Square in Manhattan. But it is enough to do the trick. Our psychiatrist-heroine turns away from her husband and toward the group of women—her sisters!—and walks into a freeze frame, another hackneyed way to let an audience know the film is finally over.

Well, the real action had been in the movie theater, and now it was outside on the sidewalk, where some two or three dozen feverish, excited women gathered for an ultra-feminist rap session. "God, I was afraid that husband of hers was going to get away with it!" said one. "Me, too!" said another. "Nah. I knew he was going to get his," said a third. But the main debate was over the propriety of choosing a mere clothing-store manager to kill off. One school of thought had it that the man killed should have been the head of a huge multinational corporation, thereby allowing the women to strike down at the same time the two enemies: male chauvinism and monopoly capital. The other school held that choosing a man of modest rank made the case even more "pure"; it was his masculinity and his masculinity alone that was the villain. I am not certain which of these two schools prevailed as, my consciousness properly raised, I soon left.

So, YOU SEE, Holland, perhaps made especially popular by the neutralist climate Walter Laqueur calls Hollanditis, has suddenly leaped into the very vanguard of world cinema, dealing with the most audacious and timely themes. It has produced the most absurd hyper-feminist film ever made anywhere, plus a lush homosexual psycho-thriller inspired entirely by a dread of women. The feminist film proved to have intense attraction for a quite tiny audience, whereas the homosexual gynophobic movie verged on having rather broad appeal. Judging by the highly unreliable indicator of reactions to these two new movies, then, the question of whether aggressive women are nowadays felt to be wonderful or something of a menace is being answered in favor of "menace"—and by a big margin at that.

Fiction

Beyond Magic Realism

Roger Kaplan

THE Peruvian novelist Mario Vargas Llosa is known both for his interest in politics and for his realistic narratives, as contrasted with the experimental forms favored by a number of his Latin American contemporaries. In his most recent novel, *The War of the End of the World*,* Vargas Llosa has expressed his views on the dynamics of his continent's politics more forthrightly than in any of his previous books. He has done so, moreover, by recreating with scrupulous precision a real historical event, and has even dedicated his work to the author of the primary source on this event, which carried within itself many if not most of the central elements, the important issues, of 20th-century Latin American politics.

That Vargas Llosa should have been willing to go back nearly a hundred years to this event and ask himself how it resembles the

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contemporary scene is in itself an act of intellectual courage in a continent that has all too often dealt with its problems by denying them. It is altogether fitting that his courage should have been rewarded with so fine a novel.

The event in question was a rebellion in 1896-97 against the young Brazilian republic which had been established five years earlier upon the abdication of Pedro II. It was a fanatically, hopelessly anti-republican action led by a messianic figure by the name of Antônio Vicente Mendes Maciel, an itinerant preacher among the poorest of the poor, who referred to him as *o Conselheiro*, the Counselor.

Four expeditions were required to subdue the Conselheiro insurrection, which was based in a locale called Canudos in the impoverished drought-stricken backlands of the province of Bahia. Accompanying the last such expedition as a journalist was a retired military engineer named Euclides da Cunha. The report he wrote, *Os Sertões* ("The Backlands," published in 1903; the 1944 English translation by Samuel Putnam, *Rebellion in the Backlands*, is still in print), was recognized immediately as a literary achievement of the first rank, one that would put Brazil, and indeed Latin America, on the world literary map. But comparatively little attention was paid to the work's prodigious importance as a political and historical document. The events it described in epic detail seem to have been outside the comprehension of a generation, in Brazil and beyond, that had not yet been shocked by world war and revolution into a somber appreciation of the nature of modern politics.

Not that the Brazilians had any difficulty understanding that the Conselheiro insurrection was a deadly serious affair. The first two reinforced police expeditions, in October and January 1896-97, were routed by the *jagunços* (backlanders), who evidently had passed from rural banditry into militant anti-republican utopianism under the leadership of the mad preacher, a figure who until then had been dismissed by Church and civil authorities alike as just another starving charismatic heretic. The political and military leaders in São Paulo now became deeply alarmed. Some of the most notorious bandits in the backlands had placed themselves in the service of the Counselor; whole families were going to Canudos; and the *jagunços* were expropriating arms and provisions from Bahia's great plantations, on which the slaves had been freed less than ten years earlier.

IT BECAME apparent that the *jagunços*, who proclaimed that the republic was the work of Satan and the Antichrist, posed a new type of military challenge to the state. Fighting irregularly, sustaining enormous losses relative to the numbers of soldiers they killed, they were driven less by territorial than by religio-political motives. Against them, Colonel Moreira Cesar, the aging hero of Brazilian republicanism, took command of a third expedition led by the crack troops of his own Seventh Regiment and supported by artillery. Moreira Cesar was every inch a political soldier. His friends organized riots in São Paulo aimed at "monarchists" who, they claimed, were responsible for the rebellion and were plotting to prevent Brazil from achieving its great destiny; the idea was that Moreira would return in triumph, seize state power, and establish a "Jacobin" republic.

But Moreira Cesar was killed before Canudos on March 3. Having driven his regiment back, the *jagunços* were now convinced the millennium was at hand. The government called a national mobilization; under the command of General Arthur Oscar, six brigades in two columns, supported by the heaviest artillery available, laid siege to Canudos. Antônio Conselheiro died of starvation in September, but, fantastically, the city held out until October. Out of a population of 20,000 or more, 300 women, old men, and children surrendered and were executed. Among the *jagunço* combatants, there were no survivors. Wrote da Cunha:

> Canudos did not surrender. The only case of its kind in history, it held out to the last man. Conquered inch by inch, in the literal meaning of the words, it fell on October 5. . . . There were only four of them left: an old man, two other full-grown men, and a child, facing a furiously raging army of five thousand soldiers.

HAD Euclides da Cunha lived (born in 1866, he was assassinated in 1909), he might have revised his text to read: "The first case of its kind. . . ." In his genius, he understood that what he had witnessed was not just a weird New World throwback to the medieval uprisings of feverish millenarians. To be sure, the Counselor and his followers were gripped by the kinds of eschatological doctrines profoundly etched in the Christian mind and which the Church, whether Catholic or Protestant, had repressed only with the greatest difficulty well into the Reformation. They believed that King Sebastian, a 16th-century Portuguese monarch who had disappeared in Africa and into apocalyptic legend, would return after they had won their victory over the satanic republic, in anticipation of the second coming of Christ. Yet whereas it could be said that medieval millenarians were only demanding immediately what Church doctrine asserted would happen sooner or later anyway, modern millenarianism represented an attack on the modern world itself, which had rejected millenarianism. Couched either in the language of religion or the language of revolution (or both), it could not coexist with secular, pluralistic, democratic political cultures.

Euclides da Cunha understood this as well as did Moreira Cesar, but he also saw in Canudos a profound tragedy for the modern spirit. Unlike Moreira, a would-be military dictator who regarded the *jagunços* as vermin and Antônio Conselheiro as a brazen insurgent in the pay of the monarchists (and the British empire), da Cunha saw in the whole affair evidence of the republic's shortcomings, of its arrogance, its lack of humanity. He believed that the republic, with whose fundamental objectives of political order and economic development he was of course in

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agreement, was spoiling its own enterprise by neglecting the backlands and treating its inhabitants like savages. Da Cunha was a man of science; he had no romantic illusions about Canudos; but he demanded a similar realism about the virtues of the republic. "What we had to face here," he wrote, "was the unlooked-for resurrection, under arms, of an old society, a dead society, galvanized into life by a madman." And then he added:

> Caught up in the sweep of modern ideas, we abruptly mounted the ladder, leaving behind us in their centuries-old semi-darkness a third of our people in the heart of our country. Deluded by a civilization which came to us second-hand . . . and shunning, in our revolutionary zeal, the slightest compromise with the exigencies of our own national interests, we merely succeeded in deepening the contrast between our mode of life and that of our rude native sons, who were more alien to us in this land of ours than were the immigrants who came from Europe.

The significance of Canudos, and of da Cunha's *Os Sertões,* to Brazil and to Latin America as a whole, is apparent from even so cursory a summary. The clash between the coast, with its great capitals and human ferment, and the appallingly poor interior; and the conflict between the modernizing middle classes, who have often relied on the military both for personal advancement and social progress, and the inheritors of the land, aristocrats as well as bondsmen, represent some of the key givens of Latin American history. They also represent issues that have never been resolved satisfactorily. In Vargas Llosa's Peru, for example, the virtual exclusion of the vast majority of the people, who are Indians, from the political and economic life of the country, has been an urgent national problem at least since the 1920's.

Latin Americans have been cursed by political and cultural traditions that have been founded on, and maintained by, lies. They are not unique in this respect, but their case is an extreme one, as their own greatest writers (not to speak of Simón Bolívar, the Liberator) have admitted. The flat denial of the racial problem in countries like Mexico and Brazil is one instance. The habit of blaming their own political instability on the scheming of the United States—or, in an earlier era, on that of the British empire—is another. The contrasting honesty of da Cunha, who sought in the geographic, the political, even the racial realities of Brazil the answers to the problems raised by the crisis he had witnessed, is unusual in Latin American letters—and so is the fact that now, Mario Vargas Llosa has dedicated his novel to Euclides da Cunha, and made wholesale use of the Brazilian's material.

This aspect of *The War of the End of the World* has received scant, if any, attention from reviewers, but it is of the utmost significance, and for more than one reason. In his work, Vargas Llosa generally has avoided the paraphernalia of tricks going under the name of "magic realism"—the deliberate obscurities, linguistic games, and irrational narrative devices, not to speak of the arbitrary use of time and space and the introduction of fantasy, which have done so much damage to Latin American writing (while delighting European literary critics and their North American fellow-travelers). It is worth speculating, indeed, that the cultivation of literary difficulty by Latin American novelists may be less a consequence of modernist literary aspiration than a result of knowing that one's writing is based on false premises. A novelist who feels compelled to say that Yankee imperialism is responsible for his country's problems, and yet who knows perfectly well that this is untrue, is, understandably, going to seek refuge in stylistic games and literary cover-ups. Thus the renewal of a link with da Cunha is important not only because of the burning urgency of the great Brazilian's theme—the false and violently destructive alternatives of revolution and militarism—but also because it suggests a desire on the part of Vargas Llosa to return to a clear, lucid, and honest tradition in Latin American writing.

Vargas Llosa's work has long expressed a profound concern with the relationship between public and private corruption. He has always been interested in politics and, rather exceptionally for a Latin American writer, has championed liberal democracy while denouncing the bigotry of those who think Latin countries must choose between Marxist utopianism and rightist dictatorship. He refuses the patronizing advice of foreigners like Guenter Grass who seek a revolutionary heaven anywhere but in their own countries, and has written (in connection with Grass, who has suggested that Latin Americans follow the example of the Sandinistas) that "an intellectual who believes that freedom is necessary and possible for his own country cannot decide that it is a superfluous luxury for others. . . ."

When Mario Vargas Llosa was growing up (he was born in 1936), freedom and democracy were anything but superfluous luxuries in Peru. The country was ruled by a military dictator named Manuel Amoretti Odría. Most Peruvian intellectuals regarded Odría's soldiers as footstools of the rich, who relied on them to stave off APRA—the Popular American Revolutionary Association—which was considered well enough organized and sufficiently popular to be the sure winner in a genuinely democratic election. But other, Left-leaning intellectuals believed that APRA represented a fascist (later, Peronist) trend, and the party was thoroughly hated by the Communists.

All this is the background of Vargas Llosa's *Conversation in the Cathedral* (1970), a novel about a rich man and his estranged son during the Odría period that fairly drips with bitterness. Powerful as it is, however, in its examination of greed and cowardice and lust, it is also marked by the influence of Lima's San Marcos University, where the intellectual atmosphere was (and remains) heavily tainted by Marxists and Communists (in the party sense). This leads to certain distortions, notably a failure to consider that the Odría period could be understood differently from the way it is described here. Actually, General Odría was

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benign and even benevolent by the standards of his time, which was the time of Juan Peron in Argentina and Perez Jiménez in Venezuela (among others). These are not the standards self-respecting Latin Americans would want to be held to, and they should not be, but the dictatorial regime that emerges from an uninformed reading of *Conversation in the Cathedral* does not really correspond to Peru under General Odría, who relinquished power on the exact day he said he would, having fulfilled his mission, as he saw it, of restoring order and legality.

Before *Conversation in the Cathedral*, Vargas Llosa wrote a partly autobiographical novel about boys in a military academy, *The Time of the Hero* (1962), which was bleak and brutal enough to be burned by the officers of the academy the author had attended, and *The Green House* (1965), which is about the jungle just outside the city, or the animal within. Both these novels won important literary prizes and were widely acclaimed, and both have much to say about the way people are exploited by others more powerful than they. The trouble with them, especially the second, is that the author's control over his material often seems tenuous and sometimes seems to disappear entirely. In the burlesque and farcical *Captain Pantoja and the Special Service* (1973), which concerns the attempt by army officers to relieve the frustrations of enlisted men in a remote garrison, the very idea of authorial control seems to be caricatured.

After the loosening-up (if that is the term) of *Pantoja*, and the touching good humor of *Aunt Julia and the Scriptwriter* (1977; English translation, 1982), the latter more evidently autobiographical than any of his books since *The Time of the Hero* (and much funnier), Vargas Llosa was, it seems, ready for the most deeply political novel of his career, *The War of the End of the World*. When coming to the latest book by a very good writer, one frequently gets the impression that all his previous work has been a preparation. This is certainly the case here, but it is equally difficult not to see in the events of Vargas Llosa's lifetime a series of inducements to write about Canudos.

In his youth, he had lived through oligarchism and military dictatorship. Thereafter, APRA was kept out of power in Peru by a rather unholy alliance among the liberal Fernando Belaúnde Terry, the Communists, and the army. But in 1968 the soldiers took over again under the leadership of General Juan Velasco Alvarado, and this time they covered their public-relations flank with leftist, Third Worldist rhetoric, which for a time they took so seriously that even Fidel Castro began revising his views on the revolutionary potential of military officials. For Vargas Llosa, who like most of the young men of his time and place had supported the Castro revolution, the experience was instructive.

Velasco bought Soviet arms, and with these there arrived military advisers and political operatives; Communists were also placed in charge of government programs. The situation in Peru thus became, and remains, somewhat reminiscent of Italy (although APRA is still the strongest force on the Left). The Velasco period, which lasted until 1980 when Belaúnde Terry's Acción Popular, now situated on the Center-Right rather than the Center-Left, came back to power, corresponds in some ways to the Italian "opening to the Left" of the early 1960's, the net result of which was a huge increase of Communist influence at all levels. In Peru, the intelligentsia is overwhelmingly Marxist. The mayor of Lima (as of Rome) is a Communist. And, almost in imitation of the Italian Red Brigades, Peruvian extremists calling themselves *Sendero Luminoso* ("Shining Path") or Túpac Amaru (after an 18th-century Inca who led a rebellion against the colonial government in Peru) have picked up the gun, hoping to provoke a military repression while at the same time castigating the official (or "democratic") Left for going legal.

In the midst of this rising national crisis—perhaps one should say, this recurring national crisis—Vargas Llosa has come to settle on centrist, democratic pluralism as the best hope for his country and his continent. Despite certain old habits of mind with regard to the United States—he condemned the rescue invasion of Grenada last year, even while he recognized that it was welcomed by the Grenadians—what he wants for his country is, in all but name, the North American model. He even helped to found a pro-democracy, pro-free-market organization called the Institute for Liberty and Democracy—and was, in fact, offered the premiership of Peru by Belaúnde Terry (which he declined on the ground that his influence and that of the Institute would be more effective if exercised privately).

The War of the End of the World can be read as a rejection of the false choice between revolution, which at some level is always based on millenarianism, and military dictatorship. Like the great classic from which it is explicitly drawn, it is a profound indictment of the lies that have brought Latin American countries repeatedly to the awful dilemma of such false choices.

Vargas Llosa despises the violent apocalypticism of the "theology of liberation"—the most influential theoretical treatise on which was written by the Peruvian priest, Gustavo Gutierrez—just as he hates the brutal and arbitrary simplicities of political soldiers. Violent religious leaders, brutal soldiers, men willing and able to make other men die for lies, are the villains of *The War of the End of the World*. Vargas Llosa's Moreira Cesar, like da Cunha's, is a ruthless and unscrupulously ambitious soldier who comes by his nickname—the Throatcutter—honestly. He is driven by his notion of what a properly regimented Brazil will be; as much a "Jacobin" for his times as Velasco was to be in the Peru of the 1970's, he cannot believe his enormous country is big enough to hold both him and the (fictional) Baron of Canabrava, a great Bahia landowner and the leader of the conservative Autonomist party, which stands for traditional order and authority. As Moreira tells the Baron:

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> There are people up in arms here who are refusing to accept the republic. Objectively, these people are the instruments of those who, like yourself, have accepted the republic the better to betray it. . . . There is now a civilian president, a party rule that divides and paralyzes the country. . . . [The army will] bring about national unity . . . create a strong, modern country. We are going to remove the obstacles in the way, I promise you: Canudos, you, the English merchants, whoever blocks our path. . . .

As for the rebellious Counselor and his acolytes, they do not express themselves quite so brutally; theirs is a rhetorical tradition based on such concepts as love and generosity and self-sacrifice. What is clear, however, is that their rhetoric is undercut by their deeds—in the quest for spiritual salvation, they are leading thousands to their doom.

REVOLUTIONARY utopians, irresponsible militarists—Vargas Llosa also has a score to settle with Third World groupies who (*à la* Guenter Grass) think they know what is best for other people's countries. The type does not appear in da Cunha's book, of course, but in Vargas Llosa's novel there is a European anarchist who goes by the assumed name Galileo Gall and who finds, in the rebels of the backlands, allies, however deluded by priestly superstitions, in the war against bourgeois order. About a third of the narrative is in fact carried by Gall's obsessive and pathetic (and fatal) attempt to be wherever the revolutionary action is.

The focus then shifts—against a canvas thick with the blood, dust, anguish, and hope of the Canudos war—to the story of Jurema, an illiterate backlander whom Gall has raped and widowed (characteristically, while trying to make himself useful to the international working class). Jurema, a witness to the sound and fury of Canudos, is a good novelistic idea, though she is not as vividly drawn as the major actors in the great drama.

As for the conservative Baron of Canabrava, he expresses a kind of mature wisdom about the world that contrasts favorably with the twin fanaticisms that engulf his province—but he too comes in for his share of the author's skepticism. Near the end of the story, he rapes his wife's maid, a rather mean touch intended perhaps to underline the point that no one gains anything from revolution, repression, and war. Or perhaps there is something of a sentimental streak in Mario Vargas Llosa. In the last line of the book the fiercest of the *jagunço* leaders is touched by an angel and goes up to heaven. We are, then, also meant to think that whereas men of power will always use their power—in little despicable ways if they cannot use it in great despicable ways—poor men will die fighting, in hope and glory, for what they believe.

These notes, variously jarring and pleasing, are sounded several times in the course of the novel; whether they serve it well or mar it depends on how intelligently and lucidly one feels Vargas Llosa has presented his complex theme. He has, in any event, like Euclides da Cunha before him, given us a powerful epic of the notions men have of themselves and their destiny, and of the terrible, destructive lengths they will go to realize them. He has also pointed the way toward a renewal in Latin American politics of the democratic faith, and in Latin American literature of a related and all but forgotten tradition of honest lucidity.

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American Promethean

MARGARET MEAD. By JANE HOWARD. *Simon & Schuster. 527 pp. $19.95.*

Reviewed by ROGER SANDALL

THE Episcopal Church certainly knew what it was doing when it invited Margaret Mead to help revise the Book of Common Prayer in 1967. Here was a bishop who carried her staff of office as if she meant it, as a true symbol of authority, and it is pleasing to learn that she gave the Episcopal bishops more than they bargained for. There had been timid talk about removing all references to Noah's Flood since nobody believed that sort of thing any more. "Bishops may not," Mead retorted, "but anthropologists do!"

She may have exaggerated a little. Few of her academic friends felt quite the same way. Yet there was growing evidence that in its more popular manifestations anthropology showed signs of becoming a new evangelical religion in which the salvation of cultures was replacing the salvation of souls. Jane Howard's biography of Margaret Mead helps one to understand this strange development, and thereby also to make sense of that extraordinary and indignant resolution, passed by the rank and file at a general meeting of the American Anthropological Association in 1983, which so roundly condemned Derek Freeman's critical study of Mead's *Coming of Age in Samoa*. The Association was reacting as if Freeman, in exposing the errors and distortions of that book, had profaned a sacred text.

It is instructive nowadays to take a copy of *Coming of Age in Samoa* down from the shelf of the nearest college library (there are sometimes twenty volumes in a row) and read the passages which students have underlined. Ancient lead pencils and ball-points and modern felt-tips have all been earnestly at work. On page 124 in the copy before me my attention is insistently drawn to the claim that in Samoa, familiarity with sex "has produced a scheme of personal relations in which there are no neurotic pictures, no frigidity, no impotence except as the temporary result of illness." Elsewhere a whole page has been underscored, its sentences informing us that

> no one is hurried along in life or punished harshly for slowness of development. Instead the gifted, precocious, are held back, until the slowest among them have caught the pace. And in personal relations, caring is as slight. Love and hate, jealousy and revenge, sorrow and bereavement, are all matters of weeks.

As Freeman has forcefully demonstrated in *Margaret Mead and Samoa: The Making and Unmaking of an Anthropological Myth*, in all key particulars her account is false, and grossly false at that. Yet in such passages, written with insinuating ease and simplicity, with deft touches of color, and in a quiet and persuasively reasonable tone, how unerringly Mead touches the anxieties of her readers, and plays upon their fantasies and hopes. Somerset Maugham may once have sheltered under the same Samoan roof gathering materials for his story "Rain," and the dying Robert Louis Stevenson may have been honored by the Samoans themselves with the accolade of Tusitala, the "teller of tales." But we all know now who deserves to be honored as the most spellbinding teller of tales from the South Seas—the young woman who in the spirit of all great romantic fiction produced that headiest of combinations, both an idyll and a text for the times.

When *Coming of Age in Samoa* was published in 1928, the harmonic reverberations were immediate. The *Nation*'s Freda Kirchwey described how Mead's "impressive study" spoke directly to the need all readers felt for a "palm-fringed South Sea Island" where love is "free, easy, and satisfying." Samuel D. Schmalhausen's *Our Changing Human Nature* (1929) cried out exultantly, "Back to the South Sea Isles," back to "naturalness and simplicity and sexual joy!" Soon Margaret Mead would be invited to contribute to a collection of essays edited by Schmalhausen with the title *Woman's Coming of Age*.

Given the mood of the time, her warm public reception was understandable. But as the years went by and the doctrine of cultural determinism assumed increasing significance within anthropology itself, even those who were in a position to correct its distortions remained silent. For example, there was the case of Ruth Benedict's reliance on a book by Mead's second husband, Reo Fortune, *The Sorcerers of Dobu*. In 1934, seeking support from the author for her use of his material, Benedict sent the manuscript of her *Patterns of Culture* to where Fortune and Mead were working together on the Sepik River in New Guinea. Fortune was urged in an accompanying note to make corrections on points of fact "but not on points of interpretation." Poor man—it was *all* interpretation! Totally intimidated by what he could see was a commanding literary performance, Fortune wrote back piteously apologizing for the messiness of his own style and offering the gratifying comment that the new book "looks grand and I'm pleased all round." In fact he was distinctly displeased, but he had no idea what to do. "I didn't correct it at all. I was left no option but to send it back to her or to drop it in the Sepik River. I didn't agree with the interpretation. Also it was wrong on points of fact." But he did not publicly admit this for forty years.

Mead's own response is also revealing. Recognizing that Benedict was having some difficulty impos-

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ing her will on the data, she advised her to decide first "who you are writing toward, read it straight through from the point of view of that person," and warned that "it would be a bad accident if your feeling for style and texture were to be spoiled by an accident of assembling miscellaneous source materials. . . ." With Benedict's "feeling for style and texture" regarded as more important than the ethnographic facts contained in Reo Fortune's "miscellaneous source materials," the priorities of the moment, both artistic and scientific, were plain.

DETAILS of this kind abound in Jane Howard's book. From the day when the nine-year-old Margaret forced her resisting parents to give her a proper Christian baptism, right on down through her marriages and divorces and the subsequent formation of a vast protective network of friends and associates and hangers-on who would provide the support and admiration she always needed (not to mention all the hard work they put in as research assistants and bag-carriers), it is all here. Miss Howard draws on the recollections of some three hundred people who knew Margaret Mead, and the variety of historical and anecdotal material makes *Margaret Mead: A Life* a valuable document of record.

But the author's journalistic approach has severe limitations. She is rarely able to bring a measured and mature judgment to the issues which most need it. A glaring example is her treatment of the debate over Freeman's *Margaret Mead and Samoa*. Another is her description of Mead's wartime book, *And Keep Your Powder Dry*, as "flippant." It would be hard to find a more inappropriate adjective. The fact is that soon after America's entry into World War II, Margaret Mead wrote a book which she dedicated to the memory of her grandmother, and to the future of her daughter, but which was really addressed in a gesture of national pride and concern to all her fellow citizens. It was partly intended to steel them for the savagery of battle and partly meant to warn them of the difficulties which might face a nation with democratic institutions and habits when faced with the military despotisms of Germany and Japan. It is a moving meditation on the strengths and weaknesses of her native land, inspired by the strong conviction that any nation so conceived and so dedicated should long endure.

Yet is there not a deep conflict here? How can patriotism of this order be squared with cultural relativism? Or, in the words of the popular doggerel:

> Margaret Mead, Margaret Mead
> Helps to fill our country's need
> Thinks our culture is much lower
> Than the one that's in Samoa.

Actually, however, so far as Margaret Mead was concerned, there

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were cultures and cultures, and some of them were not very nice at all. Generally speaking, she believed, her own was better than most, for to this persistent if irregular churchgoer, "in the Judeo-Christian system in which man becomes responsible for his own sins and for the sins of his children, we have a technique of child training which insures that man shall hunger and thirst after righteousness and never be filled." Right and wrong were taught in this system—and eating people was wrong. Of course we should learn what we could from other ways of life, and it would be stupid not to recognize certain values in other cultures. But, she wrote, "it is equally stupid to give uncritical acclaim to the achievements of other cultures." To the mocking doggerel about Samoa she might well have retorted with the lines that ridicule

> The idiot who praises in
> enthusiastic tone
> All centuries but the present
> And all countries but his own.

Still and all, a lingering sense of contradiction remains, though perhaps one may partly remove it by distinguishing between Mead's tactical and her strategic goals. The values of cultural variety and the almost "infinite malleability of human nature" which were argued in book after book might be seen as mainly tactical. They were meant to discomfit the hereditarians and to rout the anti-Semites of the period between the wars. But all of this was contained within a larger historical vision. Unlike many of her epigones, she believed that cultures both could change and should change: in her later works this was a repeated theme. And if a culture changed in the direction of individual responsibility, of the energetic and independent pursuit of material improvement, and of the institutions of a free society, it would be making a change for the better.

It might be said that the extremely voluntaristic view of society involved in the "infinite malleability" theme is not unlike the "Promethean" theme Leszek Kolakowski identifies in the thought of Marx. In both views, man is seen as heroically independent of biological, and even of physical, constraint. There is certainly a Left connection here. But whereas in Russia this sort of thing led naturally to terror, in America the result was more moderate. The notion of human malleability furnished Mead with a social philosophy which blended very well with old-fashioned American pragmatism, plus optimism, and a sense that if you really want to do something then you should get out and do it.

On the other hand, from the 1950's to the end of her life, Margaret Mead—who had previously benefited from the company of such distinguished colleagues as Franz Boas, Edward Sapir, and Ruth Benedict—was increasingly surrounded by a motley collection of picturesque dilettantes; of minor academic place seekers, willing to do what they had to in order to get on; of psychiatrists afflicted with every known disorder; and of artists and photographers and "philosophers" like Jean Houston, who is pictured in this book, alfresco, roguishly shaking a tambourine.

This bohemianization of acquaintance was ominous. For these were the years of Mead's emergence as an all-purpose counselor on social policies, busily available both in Washington and at the UN. Was marijuana dangerous for young people? Not necessarily, she informed a Senate subcommittee—and anyway, its prohibition "would be far more dangerous." Against those who had come to see the UN and UNESCO as visibly corrupt and malignant, she brought all the force of a rarely resisted will. Shirley Hazzard found herself summoned to lunch at the Cosmopolitan Club in New York. Afterward, Miss Hazzard wrote in her journal of encountering "a woman carried away with ambition and aggression, and pounding her way with brute force. . . . Her egotism was ungovernable."

These were also the years in which Mead continued to take a sympathetic interest in the paranormal and the occult. Were little green men visiting us from outer space? Why not? It is supremely

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ironic that the years of her long-delayed election to the National Academy of Sciences in 1975 and her chairmanship of the American Association for the Advancement of Science coincided with some of her silliest pronouncements: that it "seems incontestable" that there are waves of visits by UFO's; that "dowsing is a fact"; and that there is good reason for believing the claims of clairvoyants.

YET a balanced view requires that her last years be placed in perspective. Her "science" was indeed largely a vehicle for the promotion of social policies, but where she stood on particular issues was less predictable than one might think. Though she was the most influential immediate forerunner of modern feminism, it is noteworthy that her own more considered statements about men and women were conspicuously reasonable. The sisterhood and its "spokespersons" held no appeal, while grammatical feminism provoked her to cry out in exasperation, "What in thunder is gained by referring to God as 'she' except irritating people?" Mead herself might have been prepared to admit that she had not been the best of mothers: this much, at least, is clear from the meandering self-regard of Mary Catherine Bateson's memoir, *With a Daughter's Eye*.* But despite the lesbian episodes in her own life, nothing could have been further from Margaret Mead's social ideals than a world which disdains the conventional fulfillment that makes conventional motherhood and fatherhood unique.

Even more important, though she believed in the virtually infinite malleability of human nature, she never yielded to the totalitarian temptation—never argued that some utopian vision of human possibility should be imposed by an inhuman state. She undoubtedly raised false hopes and expectations, but all in all, the undogmatic, open-ended American Prometheanism of which Margaret Mead was an outstanding example should not be regarded as altogether a bad thing.

* Morrow, 242 pp., $15.95

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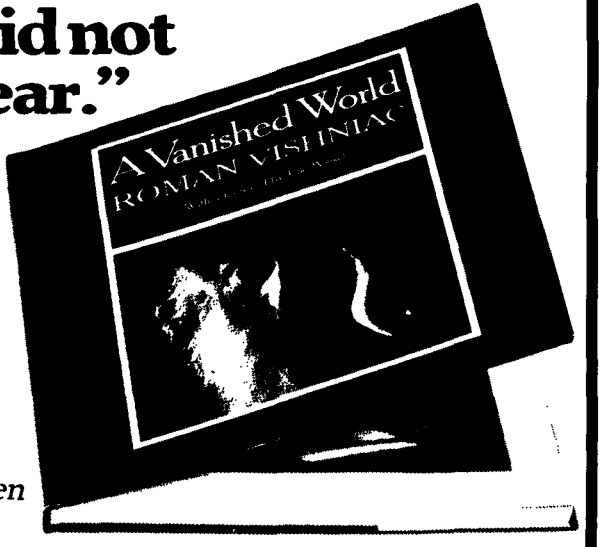

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Liberal Anti-Communism

DUBIOUS ALLIANCE: THE MAKING OF MINNESOTA'S DFL PARTY. By JOHN HAYNES. *University of Minnesota Press. 264 pp. $35.00.*

Reviewed by HARVEY KLEHR

THIRTY-SIX years ago, the Democratic party and then the American electorate decisively rejected a candidate for President, Henry Wallace, who blamed the United States for the cold war, apologized for Communist dictatorships abroad, and accepted domestic Communists as legitimate partners in his political coalition. Wallace's defeat, and Harry Truman's astounding victory, marked the triumph of liberal anti-Communism within the Democratic party. For the next two decades the party's ideological tone would be set by the liberal anti-Communist perspective which in those days was embodied in such organizations as the Americans for Democratic Action (ADA) and such politicians as Hubert Humphrey.

Liberal anti-Communists have not fared so well, however, in the judgments of recent scholars. A revisionist historiography has depreciated their motives, their tactics, and their goals. Their call for American resistance to Communism abroad and their repudiation of Communists at home have been derided as acts of cowardice and opportunism. They have been accused of surrendering to a national hysteria over Communism, and even of paving the way for McCarthyism.

Nor have they done much better recently in the political arena, and specifically in the Democratic party, where, since the death of Senator Henry Jackson, they are without a leader and less and less influential. The climate in the party has changed so dramatically that Democratic congressmen and mayors now appear at public meetings convened by Communist-front groups with hardly a murmur of protest. When Jesse Jackson praised the domestic achievements of the governments of Cuba and Nicaragua, Democratic-party leaders, instead of being outraged, expressed the hope that he would campaign for the ticket in November. Outside the party as well, the story is much the same: the largest democratic-socialist group in this country, Michael Harrington's Democratic Socialists of America, has used a sympathetic documentary film about American Communists, *Seeing Red,* for its fund-raising efforts.

One of the achievements of John Haynes's excellent book is to rescue the reputation of anti-Communist liberalism. *Dubious Alliance: The Making of Minnesota's DFL Party* is a meticulously detailed history of the war between liberals and Popular Fronters (Communists and their allies) in one state from the mid-1930's to 1948. Minnesota was an important battleground, for in no other state did Communists and Communist sympathizers play so prominent a political role. Although Communist-party membership never went much above 2,000, it included key political activists and influential union officials, particularly in the CIO, and had an established base in the Finnish communities of the Iron Range (the home of the Communist party leader, Gus Hall). Party allies included Governor Elmer Benson and the faction of the state Farmer-Labor party (FLP) which he led.

HAYNES deftly illustrates how the Communist party became so influential in state politics. Prior to 1935, it was a tiny, isolated sect, shunned by other groups, its members barred from joining the Farmer-Labor party. In that year, however, the Communist International's Seventh World Congress ordered local parties to devote all their energies to combating Adolf Hitler and building alliances with other left-wing forces. Years of revolutionary posturing and denunciations of Farmer-Laborites as "social fascists" gave way to an effort by Minnesota Communists to snuggle up to Governor Floyd Olson. After a secret meeting with party leader Earl Browder, Olson lowered the bars to Communists. Like John L. Lewis, who recruited Communist organizers for the CIO, he was convinced that he could use them for his own ends.

Had Olson lived, the Communists might have remained a very junior partner in his coalition. He died, however, in 1936 and within two years Communists had become a major force in the FLP. Elmer Benson, elected governor in 1936, was politically inept, personally sympathetic to the Communists, and much more dependent on them than Olson had been. Small Farmer-Labor clubs were overwhelmed by an influx of disciplined Communists. CIO unions led by Communists, including the United Electrical Workers and the International Woodworkers, provided another source of party influence. When AFL unions, disgruntled by the favoritism shown toward the CIO by the Benson administration, reduced their role in the Farmer-Labor movement, it became more and more dependent on organizations controlled by Communists.

Communists had burrowed into the FLP with the approval of its leaders. Some of the moles were known to be Communists; others were secret party members. Haynes is able to document just how extensive a net the party had spread by using a variety of private papers and interviews with former Communist leaders in Minnesota. Secret Communists included the personnel director of the state Highway Department, a major dispenser of patronage in the Benson administration, and numerous officials in CIO unions and local and state labor councils. Non-Communist Popular Front leaders who knew about the Communist connection would deny it when the issue was raised. Communists, for their part, would lie about their true allegiance when publicly challenged.

According to Haynes, two basic principles of the Popular Front alliance during the late 1930's were support for Soviet foreign policy and no criticism of Soviet domestic policy. Benson himself became a star attraction for such groups as the American League Against War and Fascism, even though he was

HARVEY KLEHR, *who teaches political science at Emory, is the author of* The Heyday of American Communism *and is currently at work on a book about the Amerasia case.*

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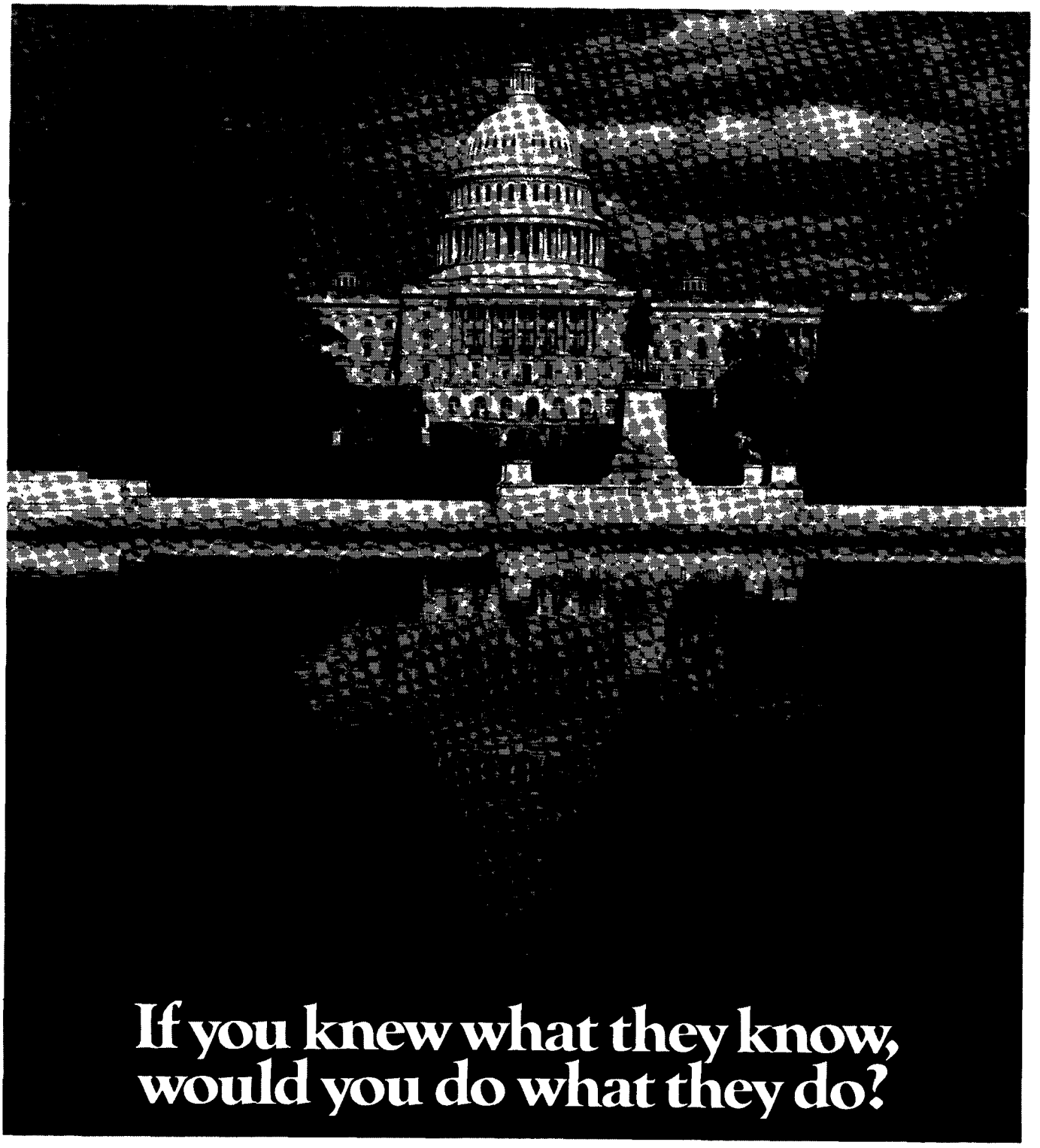

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at heart an isolationist. John Bernard, a Farmer-Labor Congressman from Duluth, cast the only vote in the House of Representatives against a bill embargoing aid to Loyalist Spain in 1937. (He formally joined the Communist party in 1977 at the age of eighty-five, the only ex-Congressman ever to acknowledge party membership.) In return, the Communists loyally supported the teetotaling Benson even when he launched a politically disastrous attack on the liquor industry. (Benson was defeated for reelection in 1938.)

In 1941, with the Popular Front faction in control of the party's organization, the FLP denounced President Roosevelt's pro-Allied foreign policy, called supporters of that policy "fascists," and expelled one local club controlled by anti-Communists for insufficient enthusiasm in opposing FDR. That, of course, was at the time of the Hitler-Stalin pact. By 1944 the Communist party had become so enthusiastic about Roosevelt that it pressured the FLP to merge with the state Democratic party, creating the Democratic Farmer-Labor Party, to help insure his reelection.

It was then that the liberal anti-Communist forces, led by Hubert Humphrey, became the major antagonists of the Popular Front. A remarkably large number of future Democratic party leaders cut their political teeth in the struggle. Humphrey was elected Mayor of Minneapolis in 1945 and United States Senator in 1948, beginning his rise to political prominence, after bruising battles with the Popular Fronters. Orville Freeman, a future Governor and Secretary of Agriculture, was the chief organizer of the anti-Communist faction. Eugene McCarthy, a young college professor, entered politics in 1947 as a Humphrey ally in St. Paul. Don Fraser, later a liberal Congressman and now Mayor of Minneapolis, organized the anti-Communists' youth wing. Evron Kirkpatrick, the political scientist whose wife now serves at the United Nations, was Humphrey's ideological mentor. And a student named Walter Mondale led the Humphrey forces at Macalester College.

The anti-Communists set out seriously to organize themselves in 1946. They created one of the most effective ADA chapters in the nation, calling for the ouster of Communists and their apologists from the DFL on both moral and practical grounds. The ADA insisted that people who did not believe in democracy did not belong in a democratic party. It also pointed out that as long as Minnesotans believed the DFL harbored supporters of Soviet tyranny, they would continue to deny it victory at the polls.

Enraged Popular Fronters branded their opponents fascists and called Humphrey "a man of Hitlerite psychology." Each side expelled the other from caucuses it controlled. After a no-holds-barred struggle, the liberals gained control of the DFL, and the Communists and their allies left the party to support Wallace's Progressive party. But deprived of the protective coloration of the DFL label, the Popular Front could get only 2.3 percent of the state's vote in the 1948 election, and disappeared thereafter into political oblivion.

Haynes's story ends in 1948, but its lessons are just as pertinent today. Liberal anti-Communism was a response to a real phenomenon, one which posed issues of the utmost gravity to the health of a democratic society, and of the Democratic party. The issues remain crucial; one wishes the response to them today, even among some of the survivors of the Humphrey group, were as forthright and as bold as in the 1940's.

Hearing a Different Tune

MUSICAL VARIATIONS ON JEWISH THOUGHT. By OLIVIER REVAULT D'ALLONNES. Translated by JUDITH L. GREENBERG. *Braziller. 113 pp. $10.95.*

Reviewed by EDWARD ROTHSTEIN

OLIVIER REVAULT D'ALLONNES, a professor of aesthetics at the Sorbonne, was quite serious when

EDWARD ROTHSTEIN *is a senior editor at the Free Press and the music critic for the* New Republic.

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he called this unusual little book *Musique: Variations sur la pensée juive.* Rendered in English as *Musical Variations on Jewish Thought,* it is a series of non-systematic, impressionistic "riffs" on the character of Judaism—variations on a theme complete with musical allusions. The epigraph is a page from Beethoven's Appassionata Sonata; the closing section is called "Finale"; and the entire essay aspires, in Pater's phrase, to the condition of music.

The condition of music, in this case, is linked to what used to be called the "Jewish question." D'Allonnes believes that Judaism is a nomadic culture, created by a people whose essence, even in biblical times, was wandering. Jews have dwelt not in space, but in time; never tied to the material world of empires and power, they have developed a unique spiritual life. The Jews have even given to Western time its shape and direction, as in the Prophets' promise that present injustices will be resolved in a future age, discords becoming consonances. All of these qualities d'Allonnes finds in music as well, particularly in the music of Beethoven—a habitation in time where present tensions dissolve into promises of liberty.

D'Allonnes's own essay, he points out, is meant to achieve something similar in words. It touches briefly, and often imaginatively, on the Bible itself, which, in his reading, tells of conflicts between the sedentary life and nomadism, the city and the desert, idolatry and freedom—as when Cain the sedentary farmer kills his nomadic brother Abel, the shepherd, and later founds the first city. In the Jewish Diaspora, the nomadic tradition which d'Allonnes finds celebrated in the Bible was sustained, leading to a culture which valued study and promoted a critical detachment, a radical "negation of the given," and a libertarian critique of the powers of the state.

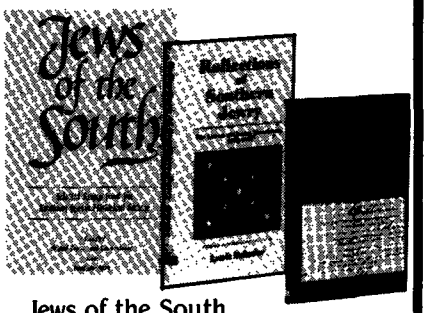
THIS discussion might seem, at first glance, innocently convincing. After all, the survival of the Jews did require the development of a certain type of exilic or "nomadic" culture; and Jewish secular, social, and textual criticism, during the last two centuries, has indeed drawn on some of the attitudes d'Allonnes outlines. Harold Bloom, in his introduction, even weaves an overly dense web linking some of d'Allonnes's hypotheses to Freud.

But the distinctive nature of the Jewish experience of time has been analyzed more suggestively by the philosopher Franz Rosenzweig, and with far greater suppleness and profundity in another recently published short book, *Zakhor,* by Yosef Yerushalmi. When d'Allonnes compares his approach to that of biblical scholars who "by the projection of their own obsessions, teach us something about them" rather than about the text, he is on to something. His obsessions with "libertarian nomadism"—projected both onto Jewish history and onto music—happen also to teach us something about him, and, through him, about contemporary intellectual fashions in general.

For d'Allonnes's sweeping characterizations of Jewish thought are far from correct. The Jews, he argues, "oppose to this unjust world a radical, absolute, unconditional refusal." This may be in some small degree true of Marx and Marcuse, as d'Allonnes implies, but it is hardly true of the Prophet Jeremiah, whom d'Allonnes links to them in the same breath, and it is altogether untrue of the Jews during the two millennia between the Prophets and his secular Jewish philosophers of the 19th and 20th centuries, a vast period about which he has nothing whatsoever to say. D'Allonnes ignores the profound "this-worldly" character of post-biblical Jewish life, fails to mention the sophisticated systems of rabbinic law or the philosophical achievements of medieval Judaism, and is silent on the communal religious practices of the Jews. Even the notion that in the context of Jewish thought "exile" might mean something different from "nomadism" does not seem to have occurred to him.

So intent is d'Allonnes on emphasizing the nomadic character of Jewish life and on linking it with his own ideals that he even distorts some biblical texts. As Harold Bloom points out, d'Allonnes bases

Southern Jews



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many of his analyses on mistaken discussions by the 19th-century philologist Ernest Renan; these errors are then compounded. D'Allonnes asserts, for example, that God's commandment to Abraham was to become a nomad, while in fact it was to leave the land of his fathers to settle in another land, the land of Canaan.

That land of Canaan, later to be called Zion, appears to pose a serious problem for d'Allonnes. In asserting that the core of Jewish existence is both nomadism and a certain relation to time, d'Allonnes has to minimize the importance of this land in biblical texts and in exilic thought. "The dream of establishing itself in space has certainly always haunted the Jewish soul," he writes, but "such a dream is senseless." It leads to "the renunciation of justice, love, inner life, and peace of body, mind, soul, and heart." Jews, d'Allonnes continues, understood even at the time of the Prophets that the "state was the worst danger, the most perverse temptation"; they had to renounce power and statehood to follow their musical path through history. His underlying intention, of course, is to argue that the contemporary Jewish state is itself something of a perverse temptation, a "renunciation of a constant principle of Judaism."

D'Allonnes's taste to the contrary, however, what enabled the Jews to survive was precisely the dream of returning to a particular place—a space, not a time. What bound them together was not a vague inner notion of "social justice" but an intricate system of laws and a mythic theodicy far different from the "open, unfettered, free life" d'Allonnes wants to celebrate.

Of course, d'Allonnes is not alone today in suggesting that the existence of Israel is a distortion of the spiritual life of the Jews. Even the Israeli novelist Amos Oz has argued something similar in his recent book, *In the Land of Israel*, where he sentimentalizes the Diaspora and criticizes the state for its earthly dealings in power and compromise. This attitude has also surfaced in other contemporary judgments being rendered against Israel, which as a mundane reality cannot hope to measure up to the standards of a spiritual model, especially one that never existed in the first place.

D'Allonnes's is a peculiarly aesthetic view of "Jewish thought," founded not on history and knowledge but upon some idealized—and politicized—vision of purity and truth. It is as if he preferred gazing at a score to listening to the music, and even then missed its structure. D'Allonnes is obviously hearing different tunes.

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Lying for Lenin

DEZINFORMATSIA: ACTIVE MEASURES IN SOVIET STRATEGY. By RICHARD H. SHULTZ and ROY GODSON. *Pergamon-Brassey's. 210 pp. $19.95.*

Reviewed by HENRIK BERING-JENSEN

LAST spring a rumor spread in the Islamic world that on his moon walk, astronaut Neil Armstrong had heard strange voices; returning to earth, he had discovered these to be an Islamic call to prayer. According to the rumor, the experience had made such a deep impression on him that he became a Muslim—whereupon the space agency promptly fired him.

All this was of course pure fantasy, and at first American embassies issued routine denials. This, however, was not enough; the story stubbornly refused to die. In the end, leading Arab journalists were connected by phone directly to Armstrong's Ohio office, so that they could hear his denial from his own mouth and report it to their readers.

This rumor, an account of which was published in the London *Sunday Times* in January 1984, is a typical example of Soviet disinformation efforts designed to turn public sentiment against the U.S. in a volatile region. In *Dezinformatsia: Active Measures in Soviet Strategy*, Richard H. Shultz and Roy Godson provide a scholarly study of activities of this kind. In the Soviet lexicon, the term "active measures" describes a wide array of techniques for influencing events in foreign countries: these include overt and covert propaganda, mass demonstrations, and the use of front organizations, agents of influence, and forgeries. The concept also encompasses paramilitary assistance to insurgents and terrorists, plus the occasional act of sabotage and murder, committed for psychological effect.

A responsibility of the International Department of the Central Committee, active measures play a crucial role in weakening opponents from the inside and securing benefits for the Soviet Union that it could not obtain through normal negotiations or even by force. Accordingly, the Soviets carefully integrate active measures into their global strategy, which again is determined by the "correlation of forces," i.e., the Kremlin's overall assessment of political, economic, and military trends.

The present study, which is supported among other things by interviews with former senior Soviet-bloc intelligence officers, concentrates mainly on disinformation ef-

HENRIK BERING-JENSEN, *a new contributor, is a Danish critic and journalist currently living in the United States.*

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forts conducted against the NATO countries in the two decades from 1960 to 1980. Here the principal goal has been to discredit, isolate, and separate the U.S. from its European allies. In the field of overt propaganda, Shultz and Godson use the "Weekly International Review" column in *Pravda* and the Soviet foreign-affairs magazine *New Times* to trace the changing themes and to demonstrate the sharp increase and growing sophistication of these efforts over the years. The themes may change, but the hostility, they show, remains constant, which is significant in view of the popular notion that the 70's were years of lessened tension. The authors' careful analysis discloses little evidence that Soviet leaders, for all their bluster and cries of alarm, actually perceived a direct threat to the Soviet Union during those years. Their propaganda reflected tactical foreign-policy objectives rather than genuine security concerns.

Closely coordinated with the overt campaigns are the covert activities. As early as 1926, the Finnish Communist leader Otto Kuusinen recommended the creation of a "solar system" of organizations and smaller committees around the Communist party, under its influence but not under its direct control. During Yuri Andropov's tenure at the KGB there occurred a spectacular elaboration of this idea. To such old-timers as the World Peace Council (1949) and the International Union of Students (1946) were added a host of smaller groups, usually with the word "peace" prominently displayed in their name, and usually with Communists in key positions. The organizational strength thus achieved was clearly demonstrated in the campaign against the neutron bomb and in the nuclear-freeze movement.

EVEN more difficult to trace are agents of influence. These are individuals who use their position as opinion-makers to promote the interests of the Soviet Union. As an example the authors cite the case of the French journalist Pierre-Charles Pathé, who for almost two decades worked to undermine French-American relations through his many connections and through his newsletter *Synthesis*, which had a small but exclusive readership among the French political elite. Shultz and Godson conclude their exhaustive account of Pathé's activities by reminding us that he was only one of a number of forces targeted at French leaders. This leads them to ponder the degree to which Soviet active measures played a part in de Gaulle's decision to withdraw from the military wing of NATO, a serious strategic loss to the alliance and one that has never been properly analyzed.

Finally there are the forgeries, which fall into two categories: complete fabrications, and doctored versions of actual documents, designed to create suspicion among the allies. These vary from the subtle to the ridiculous. One set of forgeries from the early 60's tried to depict Stratetic Air Command personnel as emotionally unstable, and featured a letter from an airman stating his intent to drop an atomic bomb on Soviet territory because he had lost a friend flying over East Germany. More sophisticated documents reveal alleged American plots to overthrow Third World leaders, alleged American attempts to interfere in the internal policies of NATO allies, and alleged American bias in inter-European quarrels. In 1978, Andreas Papandreou, then the Greek opposition leader, read a forged State Department telegram to the Greek parliament, purportedly outlining an American policy favoring Turkey over Greece. Lately we have seen a crop of material allegedly showing official American willingness to sacrifice the European allies in a limited nuclear war; the material even includes maps targeting European cities for destruction.

Some forgeries have been dismissed by the Western press as obvious plants, such as a letter supposedly from Ronald Reagan to King Juan Carlos of Spain advising the king to crack down on left-wing forces, or (in an example too recent to be included in this book) the document supposedly from the Ku Klux Klan threatening violence against non-white Olympic athletes at the 1984 Los Angeles games. Others are not so easily exposed. The authors cite a forged U.S. Army Field Manual providing guidelines for army intelligence interference in host countries and for the subversion of foreign officials and military officers. This particular fabrication, which first surfaced in Turkey in 1975, has since appeared in more than twenty countries, including the U.S. itself.

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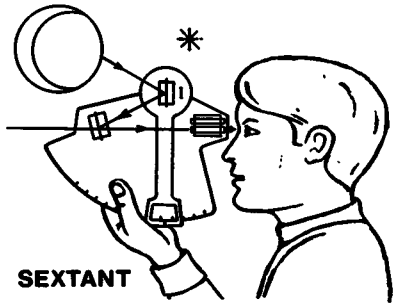

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It is difficult to assess the overall impact of Soviet active measures, for they involve a long-term process of erosion. But one sign of success may be the widespread tendency in the West to regard the U.S. rather that the USSR as the major cause of world instability and the primary threat to peace, or the equally fashionable cynicism that sees no difference between the two countries. That the Soviets themselves regard active measures as a useful foreign-policy tool and an important adjunct to the more conventional instruments of statecraft can be deduced from the constant expansion of their role and from the fact that they are controlled by the Politburo itself.

Not surprisingly, Shultz and Godson recommend more determined countermeasures by Western governments, and support such initiatives as the establishment of the National Endowment for Democracy, designed to promote democratic values abroad. But the main task must be the continued exposure of *dezinformatsia*. A democracy can make intelligent decisions about its future only if it has a clear perception of reality; it is exactly the purpose of active measures to distort that perception. If ever there was a field meriting the attention of investigative journalists, this is it.

Public Prudence

SECRETS OF THE TAX REVOLT. By JAMES RING ADAMS. *Harcourt Brace Jovanovich. 348 pp. $16.95.*

Reviewed by ROGER STARR

DESPITE its title, this book is not about the tax revolt, since there are no real secrets about the mobilization of tax-weary citizens to cut back the spending of state and local governments. It is, rather, about the still undiscovered secret of how to develop public prudence.

Public prudence requires striking a fair balance between the comforts of the present and the prospects of the future. It is not properly measured by a low level of tax collections, but by the ultimate productivity of an economy helped by public expenditures on basic facilities. Prudence does not mean that government should not invest in roads or dams or bridges or in maintaining natural resources or saving human life. It does mean that the political process has to find ways to make choices between bad and good investments, and between good and better ones.

James Ring Adams, who is on the staff of the *Wall Street Journal* editorial page, is surely the best narrator we have had of the *de-facto* bankruptcy of New York City in 1975 and subsequent years. In the pages of the *Journal* he has explained, as no one else has done, how the city was able to keep from sliding into *de-jure* bankruptcy—an experience that might have served as an enlightening example to the rest of the world, but would have been extremely hazardous for those people of New York who depend on local government for their food, drink, health, and shelter. Now, perhaps stimulated by the question of how the electorate permitted New York's rulers to mismanage its affairs badly enough to stumble into their 1975 disaster, Adams has surveyed the entire nation, and found that the struggle against collective imprudence is not a New York phenomenon alone. It is the more regrettable, then, that he purports to define the issue as an argument over the level of taxes. For as he surely recognizes, taxes in the abstract are neither good nor bad; it is the investment made with them that counts.

Adams, indeed, praises an investment like the Erie Canal, which joined the Hudson River, about 150 miles upstream from New York City, with the Great Lakes. The Canal opened a water route from the Atlantic to the heartland, and contributed mightily to the growth of New York City and the whole of the Midwest. Only a political genius like DeWitt Clinton could have distinguished the Erie Canal's prospects from those of dozens of other visionary canal schemes, most of them crackbrained, that circulated in some fairly impressive heads, including George Washington's, in the early days of the Republic. Yet the very success of the Erie Canal subsequently posed great political dangers to New York State. For, as Adams points out, it made credible a host of other proposals to tax the people to dig new ditches. Only after New Yorkers had made up, through still further taxation, the shortfall in revenues on illusory projects, did they learn that what makes a canal successful is not the water flowing in it, but the freight traveling on it.

THE central problem of public policy may be formulated as one of keeping politicians from promising more canals than they can fill with freight. There are two generally sanctioned methods, which Adams identifies as, respectively, phase one and phase two of the tax revolt. The first is to limit the amount of taxes that a legislature can impose on the people it represents. The second is to limit the amount of borrowing that a legislature will be allowed to undertake, because borrowing inevitably commits the legislature to raising whatever funds may be needed to retire the obligations undertaken.

Without effective control over the government's power to incur debt, the people are in the position of a silent partner in a business who, with a grand gesture, has been given authority to sign checks. The partnership cannot alienate any of its money without his signature. Right? Wrong! Unless the silent partner is prepared to push his own enterprise into a lawsuit by refusing to sign a check, the power to sign checks is only the power to place one's imprimatur on whatever mistakes have already been made; no more than that.

In New York, the measures developed in the 19th century to control debt differed as between the state and the city. The state, under the constitution adopted in 1846, was prohibited from borrowing long-term unless the voters at a general election specifically approved the new debt by referendum. (In those days, the upstaters, afraid that their incomes would be

ROGER STARR *is a member of the Editorial Board of the New York* Times. *His new book,* The Rise & Fall of New York City, *will be published by Basic Books in the spring.*

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crushed to pay debts incurred for their city cousins, believed that New York State would always have a rural majority.) The city's debt limit, on the other hand, was established by a mathematical formula that left nothing to chance. The city was allowed to borrow no more than 10 percent of the assessed valuation of its taxable real property.

Yet whenever New York State felt pinched in realizing its grandiose plans for expansion, clever lawyers found a way around the requirement of a constitutional referendum. As Adams tells us, they ultimately invented something called "moral obligation" borrowing: they construed the constitution as permitting the establishment of a state-owned corporation, or authority, that had the right to go to the money market and borrow up to its statutory limit. Although the state bore no responsibility for repaying these debts, each year the authority's fiscal officer had to report to the legislature the size of the gap between its earnings and the interest and principal payments due within the next year. The legislature would then have the power—though not the obligation—to hand the authority enough money to cover its debt for the year to come.

As bond buyers recognized, the legislature understood all too well that if it did not help out the unhappy authority, it would, like the silent partner with the right to sign checks, plunge it into bankruptcy. That would imperil not only all other New York State authorities but the state treasury itself. To make matters even more difficult for the taxpayers, the waiving of the referendum requirement was taken by bond underwriters as an argument for making the state pay a higher interest rate on authority bonds than on its own, voter-approved bonds. Needless to say, the same buyers simultaneously expected the state to stand as fully behind its "moral obligations" as it did behind its "full faith and credit" bonds approved by the voters.

As FOR the city, it evaded the 10-percent debt formula with even greater facility. It incurred short-term debt which it kept rolling over, year after year, securing it by a rising mountain of uncollected taxes. Somehow, bond buyers liked these short-term, safe-looking notes and kept buying them without much attention to the value of the taxes that were supposed to make them secure. The city also issued bond-anticipation notes to finance housing projects for middle-class families. Once again, instead of replacing the notes with long-term bonds that would carry higher interest rates and require periodic amortization, the city kept the projects in short-term financing. That prevented rents from rising. The State Comptroller muddied the situation further by decreeing that if a housing project had a surplus—which it might well have because its temporary financing required no amortization payments—that surplus could be applied to the arrearages of another project. Since both were then construed to be self-supporting, the housing debt would grow by that degree greater; and so on and on. Eventually the money-market crowd got wise. The billion-dollar baby became a grown-up crisis.

CALIFORNIA, Adams shows us with a wealth of detail, was the first state to reach yet a third phase of the tax revolt. From early gold-rush days, Californians had been suspicious of government. They wrote a constitution that made referenda and citizen initiatives easy. Out of a tumultuous history, recounted by Adams in an unfortunately confusing and overlong way, came a constitutional amendment—Proposition 13—that limited the power of the state to collect taxes on real property, the principal source of California's government revenues.

With California, Adams's story becomes too complicated for non-specialists in state history to follow with engrossed interest. But the basic lesson is clear: no system of tax- or debt-limitation can provide the strength-in-depth and the flexibility to set reasonable limits on government spending. (I stress the word "reasonable" since one would certainly not want so rigid a legislative ban on borrowing or on tax increases as to prevent the state from undertaking worthwhile development projects.) What such a process requires is an alert electorate, one whose political make-up reflects a balance between the cautionary interests of citizens with property and the expansionary interests of citizens who think the only property they will ever own is a share of what the government has taken away from their taxpaying neighbors.

Actually, the best system yet devised for transforming young spendthrifts into taxpayers with conservative impulses has been the purchase of a home by people who have always lived as tenants. The gradual gentrification of derelict neighborhoods proves this. As "before-and-after" interviews with those who have resuscitated brownstone houses in welfare-crammed neighborhoods reveal, nothing serves the cause of political prudence quite so well as the income-tax benefits deriving from interest payments on mortgages and local taxation, especially when combined with the experience of sending one's children to school down some mean neighboring streets.

The rise of prudence is abetted by property ownership more readily than it is by stock ownership: that is one lesson of James Adams's book, and it may even have been a secret.

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